



EPISODE 2: POWER QUESTIONS

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Hello everyone and welcome to episode two. We are going to talk about one of my favorite coaching tools today. You know it's called The Marriage Life Coach Podcast, so we're going to definitely talk about coaching tools. And today, we're going to talk about how to use power questions to make your marriage and your life better. Before we get started, I want to share one of my client's experiences of coaching with you. I know many of you listening to this might have never worked with or even heard of life coach other than maybe watching The Voice and yes, we're very similar, but not as fancy. So I will be sharing some client celebrations and experiences from time-to-time so you get a behind the scenes feel for the kind of work that we do in coaching. So today, I'm going to share with you something from my client, Heather, in New Jersey, and here's what she said.

"I stumbled upon Maggie's work while searching online for help with my marriage. As a newlywed, I was not feeling the way I thought I should feel, blissful, hopeful, and settled. I was questioning whether I had made a mistake and could not sort out my own feelings. I had worked with two counselors prior to finding Maggie, but I felt like all we did was talk rather than take action. I needed someone to ask me the tough questions and to give me constructive ways to dissect my feelings and figure out what my values related to my marriage really are. Maggie helped me do all of this and more. Her positive and unbiased approach has helped me immensely in this journey and I now have more clarity than ever in regards to not only my marriage, but what I want out of life. Maggie is a joy to work with and I'm truly grateful for our time together." And I am truly grateful for our time together,

Heather, thank you for such a beautiful celebration and for sharing a little bit about the behind the scenes of what you achieved with coaching. I love to share those. Now, I had picked this client celebration to share, not realizing it would be so perfect because you can really see from Heather's experience how questions can help bring you clarity and peace in your heart. And





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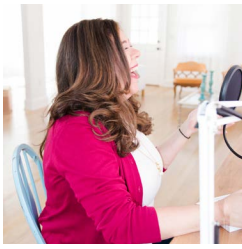
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so it just goes so perfectly with our theme today. I'm so excited. Let's dive in. The way I like to describe power questions is they are very specific questions that we ask on purpose to help us return to our own power. So think about something in your life or your marriage or something happening at work right now, where you feel stuck or dissatisfied in some way. Be really specific in your mind. Find your thing. Did you find your thing? Okay, good.

So keep that situation in mind as I go through all the examples today and see which question you can apply to it, by the time we get to the end of today's episode, and let's see what clarity that can bring you. Now, when you think about that thing or that person who's frustrating, consider the statements that you're most likely making about them. Things like, I'm so overwhelmed or this is so unfair. I can't believe this keeps happening. Ah, he just doesn't understand me or her expectations are impossible. Those types of statements feel really true and they might be true, but they are not useful. And we often think something like these useless thoughts over and over again, like thousands of times before we realize that they're not helping. Which by the way, when I was writing up the notes for this episode, I had to look up useless, make sure that was a word.

It sounded weird to me, but it in fact a word, so we're using it. Um, so questions are like a little mental GPS that gets us back on track whenever we have these useless statements just running around crazy in our minds, we use questions to bring us back instead of going in circles. Questions help us move forward in our lives and in our marriages. So whenever you find something in your life or your relationship that isn't working, it's time to really look at the questions you're asking and start upgrading the quality of your questions. I think it's Tony Robbins that has a quote that is something like the quality of your life is determined by the qualities of the questions you ask. And I think that's such a great thing to remember and that's why we're doing a whole episode just on questions including five of my favorites that I love





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using.

So think about questions that keep you stuck. Things like, why does this keep happening to me? Why is life so hard? Those type of questions that we sort of ask and never answer, they can either help you get to the root cause of something if we answer them or they can just keep you stuck if you sort of leave them hanging. So notice, this is so cool, even the same question used with the intention of returning to your own power becomes a powerful question. So if we ask something like, why does this keep happening to me and never answer it, and we all have done that, I know I have done that for absolutely sure, we do something like that, we don't get anywhere. But if we ask, why does this keep happening to me, and we answer it, then we can move forward. So I'll give you a work example back from my HR days, I would have team members come into my office and ask me things like, why do they always get the hard assignments?

They were the ones, they always get the hard assignments. Why does that keep happening? And oftentimes they were frustrated, but the real reason was because they were amazing at what they did. And their boss trusted them with those really difficult and tricky projects. I have been that person sometimes too. I was like, why did I get this crazy project? Because we know you can do it Mags. Anyway, oftentimes that same person while being great at hard things also has a really hard time saying no if her schedule was too full. So it would keep happening. And that's totally been me, thinking I wrote this example generically and I'm like, oh, I did that. Yup, check, check. So people would come to me besides myself and would ask me, how does this keep happening? And if someone came to me now and said that what I would ask is, "what do you need to say no to or yes to in this situation?"

So sometimes just a very simple question like, "what am I saying no to in order to say yes to





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this?" Will bring us so much clarity. So notice that powerful questions can be very, very simple and often the simpler the better, the more clear they'll help you get and notice that you can use different questions to bring you different levels of clarity with things. So I like to think of questions like sweaters. I like to try them on, I like to see how they feel. I like to keep trying on different ones until I get that cozy, comfy feeling of the perfect sweater. And I just have to remind you all, I live in Miami, Florida, so my obsession with sweaters is very, very amusing to my friends and to my hubby. And since I mentioned sweaters, I will tell you the story of one, which also illustrates how a powerful question can help you make a dream come true.

This is a very simple dream, but I like big dreams and little dreams. We're going to talk a lot about that on the podcast. Sometimes we think our dreams need to be fancy and sometimes really simple dreams are beautiful dreams to experience. So this is an Oprah story. There will be many on the podcast. This is a heads up. If you listen to me for a while at some point I will mention Oprah. So far we've had two episodes and I've mentioned her twice. I won't mention her every time, I promise, but today I will. So, when she had the 25th season of her show, she gave away these really beautiful Ralph Lauren, 100% cashmere sweaters. They were in this golden camel color. They're unforgettable, and they had Oprah 25th season. Um, I don't know what it's called, embroidered on them. It's, it was this beautiful, like one of a kind type of thing.

And I passionately love Oprah. I grew up watching her show and I really wanted to be part of that celebration of her 25th season in some way. So I asked myself, how can I have a piece of that part of Oprah history? Like is that even possible? And that powerful question brought me to the magic of eBay. You guys all know eBay where you can buy and sell things. Uh, believe it or not, someone actually received a 25th anniversary sweater and did not want it. You know how one woman's trash is another woman's treasure. Somebody put that on sale on eBay and I bought it with lots of glee. So it gets better the day that sweater arrived, as per usual is a very





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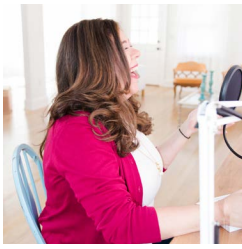
hot and humid day in beautiful, sunny, maybe Florida. And I turn down the AC in my house to the lowest I could possibly stand just so I could put on the sweater and be wearing it when my hubby got home and it was so much fun to do that.

The memory of it still makes me laugh every time I tell this story. And it was a dream come true to just have a little piece of that Oprah history. I still own that sweater. I still wear it when we travel to cold places. And it feels wonderful and it just feels like a beautiful little dream came true every time. It's like every time I wear that sweater and angel gets her wings in heaven somewhere. So that sweater is literally the answer to a powerful question that I asked myself. So now I want to share with you five of my favorite power questions that I use over and over again to help me really focus on what matters to me. Here we go. Here's the first one. What would love do now? Now I like to use this in two ways. It's a sort of like a universal power question to just ask what would love do now?

But you could also say, what would the energy that I want to embody do now? Kind of like a fill in the blanker like a choose your own adventure. So it could be what would courage do now? What would confidence do now? What would compassion do right now? If I felt empathy for my honey, what would empathy do in this situation? If I could remove myself from it and really put myself in that person's shoes and feel empathy, what would I do? So I like to use what would the energy that I want to embody now and very, very often the energy I want to embody is love, so it's very easy to ask what would love do now. Then so you ask the question, you listen for the answer, so you pause, you listen for the answer and then you decide what your next move is accordingly to the answer.

So that's the first one. My second power question of the five is what would my highest and best self do in this situation? Now I know sometimes we don't want to be the bigger person





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and I have literally had situations with my husband where I have told him I do not want to be the bigger person right now, I want to be the small, tiny person. But the truth is privately in a moment. But then once you've had that moment, you can ask yourself what would the highest and best self, what would my highest and best self do in this situation? And then see what that answer is and it's often not your first instinct. It often takes a little bit of thinking and a little bit of generosity and compassion to really connect with that and that answer will always lead you to something good.

When you ask for your highest and best self to give you some guidance, the guidance is going to be good. Next, how could this happen for me? How could this happen for me? Or simply just how can I make this happen? Anything around a goal that you have and what it might take to accomplish it to get you into a state of resourcefulness around all the different ways that a goal could happen. And I love to use this example to explain this question because it was a very personal example for me back when I was still working in human resources and I had a situation where someone in a neighboring department, not my department, got promoted. And it was a very interesting situation with this promotion. And because of the circumstances of the promotion, it really made me think about the fact that I hadn't gotten promoted and that I really want to be promoted at that time.

And I remember thinking, wallowing will not get me anywhere. Like wallowing in self pity, worrying about what this person did or didn't do, did they deserve a promotion or not. That was really a waste of time. So what I did was I made an appointment with my boss and I asked, what milestones do I need to reach for a promotion to be possible for me? In other words, instead of wallowing, which would have led me nowhere, I asked, what actions can I take? What projects could I work on? What are the things that I could proactively and resourcefully do that could lead to a promotion. And that felt so good to me in the moment because when I made the





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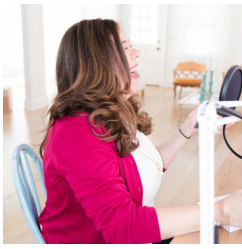
appointment of my boss, I didn't know what the outcome was going to be, but I just felt so good to take positive action on my own behalf.

And I'm really happy to say that the result of that meeting was my boss had to think about it. She came back to me. We discussed the different things that we were working on at the time, and I did relatively speaking, shortly thereafter, get promoted, which I'm not sure if that would have happened had I taken a different approach at that sort of a fork in the road, right? I could have become bitter or it could have become better and I chose to better. So any type of question that helps you get into resourcefulness is always a useful question. And resourcefulness is one of the best words. I love that word so much. To remind us to use the resources we already have, to seek out resources from neighbors and colleagues to use the resource of our brain, our imagination, our creativity to create the results that we want in our marriages and in our lives.

So I love that. So with our hubbys, very easily, it can be, how can we make that happen? What needs to happen if we want to go on a date night, for example, many, many of my clients, want to go on date nights, but they have kids and they have to figure out who's going to take care of the kids. I don't have kids. Uh, so I don't go through that particular challenge. I have different ones. Uh, but often it's a matter of sitting down and saying, okay, if we want to prioritize a date night, what needs to happen for that to become possible for us and for us to be able to spend together time as adults connecting with each other. So that is my favorite. How could this happen for me? Or any version of how can I get resourceful about creating this result? The next one is one of my favorite, favorite coaching questions.

It's one of my favorite, favorite questions ever. I use it on myself. I use it on my clients all the time. It's what am I making this mean? So something happens, an event occurs and I attach





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a meaning to it. And very often the meaning that I attached to it may or may not be correct. It may not be accurate or it may be accurate, but it may not be useful. 'Kay? So what am I making this mean? If you think about that situation I asked you to think about at the beginning of the episode, what's challenging right now? Look at the meaning that you currently have and just notice that that's a meaning that you can take a step back and say, I am making this situation mean this, whatever it is that you feel about it and you can decide to look for, in a resourceful way,

another meaning that might be more useful, more productive, more helpful. And I'll give you a real life example of a meaning that I made that was not useful for me, and how we turned it around. So when I got engaged to my hubby, we gave each other engagement rings. So he in traditional manner gave me an engagement ring and I in nontraditional manner also gave him an engagement ring and that was really fun and it was really cool to give him the ring. He was so excited to receive it. He wore it very, very proudly. We were both really excited to get married and it just felt really good and he really enjoyed it. So it was very special giving him the ring. It was like we went to like his old pizza place where he used to go after school and high school and it was just a really fun kind of thing when I gave him the ring.

Now a couple of weeks before the wedding, this ring that he's been wearing for months, we probably took maybe a year to like plan our wedding. So he'd been wearing the ring maybe for almost a whole year. He just very casually tells me that he's going to throw away his engagement ring, like in the garbage, like throw away. Right. And I freaked the freak out. So here's what happened. He informed me of an action he was going to take. And here's the meaning that I attached to it. And I'm telling you this story, you know, I've been married now, this will be our 13th year married, so I'm telling you the story very calmly today. But when it happened, I burst into tears, the ugly snotty cry. It was not pretty. I just burst into tears





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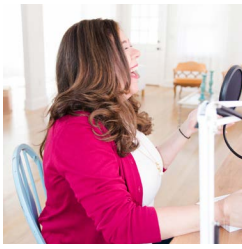
immediately. And this was the meaning that I attached. He doesn't care. It doesn't matter to him.

It was meaningless to him. Does that mean that our love is meaningless? Does he really care? Like it was just this immense cycle of, oh my gosh. Right. And I remember being in tears and having literally a two hour conversation with my poor, dear sweet fiance about this issue where I just kept crying and probably not even letting him get a word in edgewise, I suspect. Um, but it was two hours. I cannot understand and I cannot process any other meaning other than he doesn't care. You following me? What am I making this mean? I made it mean he doesn't care. So listen, while we were talking, eventually he got through to me and this is what he explained. He said, "When we get married, my wedding ring will be the most important thing that I wear. I will wear it every day and I won't need this ring anymore."

That's it. That's all he meant. I won't need this ring anymore. And I can tell you because we have been married so long that he always wears his wedding ring. He never takes it off. Um, I love seeing him wear it. He loves wearing it. So what he was saying was true, but I could not see that in that moment that he was getting a different ring and he didn't need the other ring anymore. That his wedding ring was so much more important to him than his engagement ring. And I just couldn't see it, so I was just in tears for two hours over this. And now my hubby is an engineer. He's very practical. He works with computers. So he constantly in his normal everyday life will work with machines and devices and things that come to end of life, like the end of their usefulness.

So if he has a software that's no longer supported or if there's a server that you know it expires and the support that they give it, he very often has things in his life that reach end of life and are discarded, recycled, put away, put aside this is very normal. There's no like deep dark





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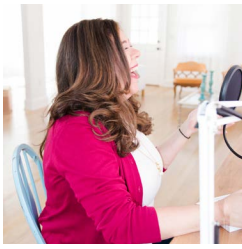
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meaning or anything like that. It has just reached the end of its usefulness and he felt the same way about this ring. It reached the end of its usefulness. But the meaning that I made caused me so much pain until I was able to calm down enough to listen to what he was sharing and to really understand that there could be a different meaning and that that meaning didn't have to feel bad.

Ah, I just feel like the relief of ah, so when you're feeling really intense emotion or great thing to do is to pause, take a deep breath, ask yourself, what am I making this mean? Check-in? Whether there's a different alternate meaning that could be more helpful or more constructive for you. And also as a heads up you can ask your honey. What do you mean by that? Just out of pure curiosity, just to get clarity, just from a space of open listening. Hey, what do you mean by that? Before you make up the story, before you start crying like I did, you can just ask what do you mean by that? And that will, if you get into the habit of doing that, you'll just save yourself so much strife and so much grief. So what am I making it mean? Great question. It's like a power tool.

All of these are really like the power tools to use to help you feel better. And the last one for today, the last one in the set of power questions is, what do I want? And being really specific with the answer. So one thing I see a lot in my coaching practice is women married to men who are frustrated because they feel like they're not getting what they want from their partner. But when their partner asks, they can't really say with any degree of clarity what what they want looks like. So I hear things like I want to feel closer or I want to spend more time with you, or even I want to have more sex. How much sex? How often? We need the details people. So the question is what do I want? And then being very, very specific with the answer. So something like I want to go to the movies on a Friday and after that I want to go to a nice place for dessert.





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My dessert of choice would be ice cream. Thank you very much. I want to talk about the situation that happened last week when we're both calm. When would be a good time? I want help with the laundry, very specific. Now a lot of the women that I speak to have prioritized everyone else's needs so much that they have often lost connection with their own desires. If that feels familiar, like if it feels hard to be specific, then this week as you go out and about in your daily life, just practice wanting things and choosing things. Very simple, small things. A cup of tea or a cup of coffee, a piece of pie or a scoop of ice cream. Calling a friend and chatting, right? Putting on your favorite sweater on purpose because you love it. Think about the things that would light you up. The way that Oprah sweater lit me up and really tune into what would bring you delight and see when you tune into that, what can you ask your partner to participate with you in?

What can you ask them to team up with you about? If you want to go to the movies or if you want to take a bike ride or if you want to visit a friend or if you want to plan something special, see where you have opportunities to include your partner, but just practice noticing the things that you enjoy and experimenting with things. Oh, what do I enjoy? Do I would I rather have a cup of coffee or a cup of tea or just water? And then notice where your preferences are to start connecting with your delights in that way. So to recap, I'm going to tell you the five power questions. So you have them sort of easy to remember. What would love or the energy I want do now? What would my highest and best self do in this situation? How or any variation of how that gets you into resourcefulness.

What am I making this mean and what do I want? Those are the five questions. Now my team made a great, very simple download for you that has a slightly different explanation for these questions. So I still use all the same questions and you'll just see the story about the engagement ring in there, slightly edited, so it has all these five questions. And on the last page





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of the download, you can print just the questions on one sheet and put them somewhere where you'll see them often, and you'll ask them often so that you practice really returning to your own power over and over and over again. So the link for that will be in the show notes, and that is a wrap on episode two. If you found it useful, please leave a review and remember to subscribe so you never miss an episode. Okay, love monkeys. Remember to choose love today. Bye.

