

# EPISODE 10: HOW TO MANAGE CRISIS AS A TEAM

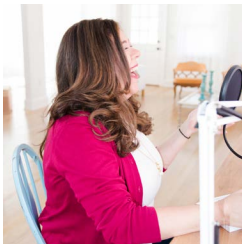
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Hello everyone. This is a very special episode today for a lot of reasons. The biggest reason for me is when I started dreaming about having a podcast, one of my plans was to have my hubby be the very first guest on the show ever and that dream is coming true today. We had planned another topic for our first show together and I'm going to keep you in suspense about what that is, but after chatting a bit with the hubby to prepare today's episode, I know we have at least two or three more episodes coming up where we will share some different behind the scenes moments and ideas from our own marriage and some lessons learned about why we work so well together to help give you all ideas of how to approach things. Today, one thing I really want to invite you to do as you listen to us is really think about how you will apply whatever we're talking about to your specific situation.

There are some things you might do exactly the way we do them or you might experiment with doing them similarly to us and there are other things where the examples we're going to give you just don't apply. So the question I invite you to have running through your head as you listen to this episode is either how does this apply to me or what is my version of this that I can experiment with tonight or tomorrow. And if you're listening to the podcast for the very first time, hello and welcome, we are happy you're here and if you've been listening since episode one, thanks for coming back. I absolutely love hearing the feedback of how you all are applying the things I'm teaching you here into your own relationships. I had a chat with a client recently where she took the emotional weight loss episode and I'll link to that in the show notes where I talk about no complaining and no defending and she just used that like a mantra on a trip with her husband.

This was back in the days when we could all still travel, which seems like yesterday and a decade ago at the same time. Anyway, it was so amazing to hear how she used that and





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how that helped her get closer and closer with her husband. So I really invite you when you listen to any of the episodes of the podcast, listen with intent to apply. So it's like instead of masterminding your crime, you're masterminding your marriage. And definitely in today's episode, listen with intent to apply. So now I have the very exciting and difficult task of introducing you all to the love of my life. And it's not very often that you get to do that, like to make an official presentation of the person you love most on Earth. And on a personal level, the way I see my husband is such a man of integrity, he has such a heart for people.

If you ever watch that TV show Parenthood with Adam Braverman, remember that character? We sometimes joke around and say, yes, Adam Braverman. He is that guy that everyone just relies on in good times and hard times because he will figure it out just no matter what. And he's super funny and sweet and a total nerd as I am too. So that really does work in our favor and as you'll be able to tell as you listen to the different episodes of this podcast and as you listen to us talking today, I do have a crush on my own husband. I think it's delightful. I think we all should. So I hope you have fun with that and I want to tell you a little bit about him professionally. So professionally he is the senior vice president of IT at a credit card processing company and he's been there for over 20 years and he worked his way up right out of college.

He's also a computer engineer. He has an MBA and I want you to know his professional credentials because I think it's important to share that he's a really thoughtful person, like he thinks about his team, his projects. Sometimes he has projects with 700 to do items on them and he just plans and executes and he does it with heart, but he is also so methodical about it and I think that is so useful in a crisis, which is why I really wanted to have him on today to talk about managing crisis as a team. And today as we record this, we're going through this worldwide situation with the Corona virus, but you might listen to this five years from now and





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be going through some other kinds of crisis. And I really think even though we'll be specific about some of the things we're doing now, the thought process behind how we approach things will really help you no matter what crisis you're facing.

And that is really our highest intention for this episode, is that what we talk about will help you with the current crisis, but also help you think about how to manage these types of things when they come up in life. And I really want to share this because I think it's so important. I have been looking up the word crisis since it's on our minds right now. It's like every headline has it in there somewhere. And my favorite definition of it is a crisis is a turning point. It's a moment when you have to make a decision and that decision must be made. Now we cannot procrastinate it away. We cannot leave it for later. We must choose a path and we must choose it now. And when you think about a crisis like that, it's just a choice. And we have made thousands of choices in our lives already, probably millions of choices.

And this is just another set of choices that we have to make. And when I think that way, it just calms me down. It really helps me think more clearly about whatever's important that I need to make a choice on today. So consider that when you see the headlines. Okay, here we go. Welcome to the love of my life. Welcome to The Marriage Life Coach Podcast. Thanks for being here. And is there anything you want to share before we dive in? Just I'm glad this is not on video 'cause otherwise I'd be blushing. Thank you for having me as your first guest, very exciting. I love it. Okay, so today we're going to talk about managing a crisis as a team and we kind of laid out some bullet points before we hopped on to record. And one of the things I like to do for my listeners is kind of walk them through what we're going to talk about and then talk about it.

So I'm just gonna lay out for you guys, these are sort of the bullet points we're going to cover





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and then we're going to go back and talk about each one. We're going to talk a little bit about setting priorities. We're going to talk about what to do when you disagree. We're going to talk about educating yourself enough to make decisions without being paralyzed, but not over consuming the news. I think that's something we're all sort of challenged with. How much do we really need to know to make decisions? And then we live in Florida and so we grew up, both my husband and I grew up having to manage hurricanes as a crisis and the most recent one was a couple of years ago where we had hurricane Irma come and it ended up not doing the damage that was expected, but we had to prepare for it as if it was going to do that damage.

And we talked a little bit about sharing some of our lessons learned from managing that crisis together as a team and how we can apply it now. And we're also going to talk about what to do during all this at home time that we're all going to have together, and how we're approaching it, and some of the fun things that we do to really cultivate partnership and connection. And some of the practical tips, some of the actual day to day things that we're doing to just keep ourselves as safe as we can. So that's the plan for today. So let's go ahead and start with setting priorities and I'd love to hear, the hubby, talk a little bit about setting priorities in a crisis and setting priorities in general. Anything you want to share around that?

Oh, of course, it probably helps the, you know, my management and project management background that, you know, I'm used to, having to delineate all the things that you have to do to accomplish a task. But first you have to set what do you want to accomplish? That's, you know, before you start figuring out what to do to implement something, is like what are actually your priorities, especially when for whatever reason you can't do everything. So in the case of the hurricane with Irma, for example, my first priority was what can we do to protect the house? And we had an issue where we had to ensure that the front door was properly protected because





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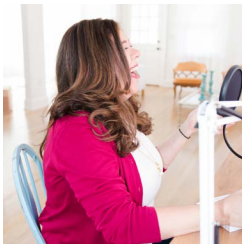
that was like kind of the weakest link of the house. And we addressed that. And then I thought I was like, well then the house will, you know, we've done what we could to make it safe. It may still be gone, you know, the hurricane may still destroy it, but we did all we could, now let's talk about us. You know, what are our priorities and in our case, we decided that, you know, you and I being together and being safe was a priority. And so then, okay, what do we have to do to execute to make sure that happened?

Yeah, that's beautiful. I think it's so important to think about, what is our goal? And I ask my clients this, like a broken record like all the time. Sometimes they come to me with being stressed about something or worried about something or offended about something and it's like, wait, wait, hold on. What's your actual goal and how will doing this or going deeper down this path help you accomplish that goal. And very often when we have the moment to pause and check in with what is the goal, we realize we need to walk down a different road if you want to get to that goal. So I think that that's super important to check in for anything in life. Right?

Even so many of our listeners also have teams and also have, you know, situations at work that are unprecedented. You know, no one has ever had to decide what to do for something like this before. And it's like, wait, what is our goal? And then that informs and makes your actions so much easier to determine. Would you agree? 100% yeah. Wouldn't it be funny if you'd said, no? So setting priorities, so talking about a little bit of, what to do when you disagree. So one thing is if, when you set priorities, like my husband and I tend to agree quite often, quite a lot, but there are moments when we disagree or we look at things differently and for sure our listeners I know have moments when they disagree and they're looking at things differently. And we really wanted to talk about what to do when you're not on the same page about making a decision. And so would you share with everyone your thought, this is something my husband







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really introduced to our marriage and it's kind of like a standard thing we do now without even thinking about it. But as we were preparing for today, I was like, oh wait, he really made that up and it works. Awesome. So can you just share about must haves versus nice to haves and what your thought process is behind that?

Yeah, it's kind of like with the military where you have like primary objectives which you must get done, that's the purpose of the mission and secondary objectives is like if you get these done, great but they're, you know, don't lose focus on the primary things to get those done. So yeah, when you have to figure out, especially if you disagree on what to do or how to do something, then you have to figure out what's really important and what you'd like to have, but it's not as important. And you have to listen, really engage in active listening to understand the other person's point of view and figure out what are the priorities. And maybe they're, you know, it's not an issue because they're different and you can accommodate one and the other person can accommodate the other. But you know, you need to go through that process first, must have versus nice to have.

Awesome. So you mentioned the concept of active listening. How would you describe that briefly, just for our listeners to understand what you're referring to there?

I would say it's just don't be stuck in your head, you know, thinking your thoughts and not really paying attention to the concerns of the other person. You know, you really need to understand their point of view before you can make decisions together.

I see this a lot. Definitely in my coaching practice and I have been this way, which my husband is here, so he can attest this, that if I'm blinded by emotion, if I feel really strongly about





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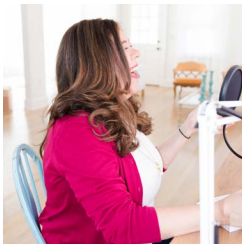
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something, I'm not listening at the best that I can. I am not really listening at all, if that's the case. It's almost like when you're cut off in traffic and you see red and your whole body is like flooded by these chemicals, which is the worst time to make decisions. It's the worst time to problem solve when you're feeling that way. So one thing that I want all of you guys to listen to is if, if you are disagreeing about something about how to handle any kind of crisis, it's often best to take a step back and just be calm and then come back to it when you do have the ability to listen to the other person.

And I always say engage with curiosity, like engage with why do they think this way? Like walk me through what are your thoughts? Just from a place of completely neutrality. Even if you decide later that you're going to do something completely different, just to understand their thought process on the situation. And then one thing that you and I do a lot that I think is useful and I'd love to hear your thoughts about it is we check in a lot about what's really important to you and what's really important to me. So I might feel super strongly about something, but it's not that important to me and something else is more important to you. And so we kind of defer to each other back and forth in terms of, okay, among this lists of things, this really matters to me. So we're going to do what I think, but among this list of things, this other piece really matters to you and we're going to do what you think about that. Can you share a little bit about your experience on the other side of that?

Yeah, no, just that that works. You know, we kind of find a balance that way. It's not like, I don't have to keep score. It's like well you got two things that you wanted and therefore I must get exactly the same. Or maybe I get three cause you know, whatever. I'm special and I get more. No, it's like you listen and you know you negotiate your way, you know, listening with compassionate love, and find a way to go forward - together - meeting everybody's most





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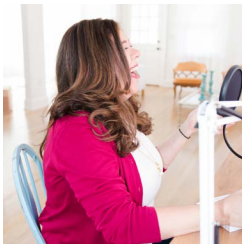
critical needs. You're not going to get everything done. Like for example, when we worried about our house, we couldn't, unless you lived in an RV, you can't really pack up your entire house and take it with you. So we had to prioritize what are we going to take with us. You know, what's important, things we're not wanting to lose if the worst happens.

Although an RV could be in our future someday. No, I think that's great. I think you touched upon something that's really important that is thriving and I talk about the five star marriage all the time and how important it is. Like we don't just want to get by, we don't just want to survive. My goal is for everyone who listens to me to understand what thriving looks like and then to do as many things as possible and think in ways that cultivate the possibility of thriving and thriving just doesn't keep score. Thriving is what's best for the marriage. Like what's best for the unit of both of us as a team versus what's best for one of us individually and sometimes what's best for the marriage is to defer to one person on the team versus the other person on the team.

Okay, my husband is nodding. That's right. Yeah, there you go. Like, it's a podcast. You have to say things, but I agree. Good. Same. Okay, awesome. Okay, so the next thing, so yeah, before we started recording he's like, do we need hand signals for this? I'm like, I don't think so. Maybe we do. Okay. So the next thing we wanted to talk about was educating yourself enough to make decisions without being paralyzed. And what is like a balanced consumption of the news or a balanced consumption of information? Where do you get your information from? Like what are reliable sources. I'm on Facebook a lot and you know, people will share things that have no attribution, and describe things that, you know, some things we want to be able to verify. And I think that that's really important. So tell me your thoughts on educating yourself enough to make decisions without being overwhelmed by what you're reading or consuming.







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It's I'd say it's a tricky balance and I think it's probably different for different people. You know, some people can absorb more information without, you know, being overwhelmed or, you know, switching to panic mode. I think it's important to definitely find reliable sources. Like in my case, you know, I oversee disaster recovery and hurricane preparedness for our office. So I, you know, over time, I put together a list of these sites I want to track that provide useful information. The same thing with the Corona virus, you know, reliable sources, national sources like CNN, local news sources, different scientific sites. But yeah, you know, there's a lot of hearsay and stuff, so you don't want to get wrong information. And you also don't just want to be watching news 24-7 and being paralyzed with fear because that's not going to help you do anything you do to prepare.

Yeah, totally. What's your thought process - I'm kind of just concentrating on everything he's saying - so what is your thought process on how you compile that list of sources? I thought that was really interesting because you have to do this not just for us as a family and as a couple, but you have to do this for your team and for your office. So when you think this is a source of information, I'm going to trust it. This gets on the list. Like how, what's your criteria for assessing that?

I definitely want something that's reliable, you know, so, you know, government sources, like I said, reputable news sources, you know, you kind of build it up over time. You know, two weeks ago I didn't have any, but as I have found a good source, I was like, okay, let me save this. Let me bookmark this and you know, I can reference it. So for example, check the number of cases in worldwide or in the U S or in Florida or in their local counties every morning, let's see what is it, you know, how is it progressing? Are we getting better or getting worse? You don't get, you know, quantifiable numbers that you can measure. You know, that for me is useful to be able to track





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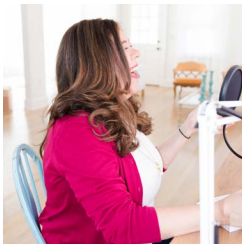
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and see how best to prepare or you know, is the worst to come, that sort of thing. You know, you can't make plans without information. So first you have to get just that information but don't just be, you know, watching TV twelve hours a day.

Yes, yes. And I find that for myself, something that comforts me in a crisis is information. I really like to know, then plan for the worst case scenario. Which, let me just tell you guys really tripped my husband up in the beginning when we first got together, he's like, why do you think about the worst case scenario? It comforts me to think if I can handle that, then I can go back and handle anything else before that. But even though information is something I find comforting, I do find that I have to have some discernment about how much do you consume and how. Like as he was saying, what are the sources that I'm getting the information from and then how do I apply it? How is this useful to me personally? So one thing that happened recently is I read an article from like a respiratory therapist that was explaining what physiologically happens in the body with this particular virus.

And what that did for me, the way I applied that to myself was it helped me remember why I'm taking all these precautions. Like it helped me refocus on why everything that we're doing today matters. Not just for me but for everyone else, right? I'm protecting myself and I'm also protecting others by not exposing myself to other people. So that's the question I think is really useful when you're consuming information is like how will I use this information? Kind of going back to the first point that you made is what is my goal? And then finding the pieces of information that fit into this will help me with my goal or is it, I just, I'm trying to like numb out looking at more and more of this information. Anything to add? Anything to add there? No, I think that's pretty good. Okay. Awesome. Great.





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So now let's talk a little bit about lessons learned from Irma because I think one thing you and I have talked about in the last couple of weeks has been how going through that crisis helped us become a calmer and more centered and more grounded in this situation. And so just to recap, as I mentioned earlier in the episode, we deal with hurricanes all the time in Florida. And sometimes hurricanes are devastating and sometimes they miss us, but we always have to prepare for the worst and then, you know, be grateful if that's not what happens. And with Irma in particular, there was a moment where, so we live in Miami and there was a moment that it was announced that it was for sure coming here and then it was category five, which was the highest possible it could be. And basically a category five, you know, roofs get ripped off and your personal safety is compromised to the point where my thing is anything can become a projectile, like the chair on your patio can just be ripped out of the air and can become a dangerous thing, which it wouldn't be in normal circumstances.

And so one of the things that we talked about in our lessons learned from Irma, which was also a [inaudible]. What are our priorities? I think we kind of covered, and if you have anything to add to that we can. But as we talked about really giving each other grace and being a little bit more forgiving with each other, because both of us, if you're going through a common crisis together, both people are going to be stressed more than usual. And it's the moment to find the place to give each other grace if you can. So do you have anything you want to just share about that?

Yeah, just that you know, everybody's going to be full of stress hormones. It's a very intense situation. You know, your judgments are compromised, both of your judgments are compromised. So, you know, you have to be gentle and forgiving with each other. You have to understand that someone may overreact or panic or you know, you may say things you regret,





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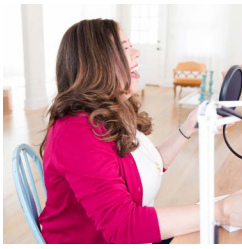
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and not take it personally. It's like it's, you know, you're processing, you're both processing a lot during that moment. And that doesn't mean you can't get past it and of we certainly did, of course.

Yeah. And I think it's important to really think about, this just came to me as I was listening to you, but to think about making a choice that you will be the bigger person. Like both of you, if both of you made the choice to say whatever happens right now, I will be the bigger person. I will apologize first. Or I will say, let's take a break first. It allows you both to really hold each other with compassion and love no matter how stressed you are. And one of the things that I see that couples struggle with a lot is they say, well, why should I go first? Why should I be the bigger person, why should I act? And it's like, because the goal is you together as a team, right? And if you remember the goal, then it becomes so much easier to then say, well, I'll go first. What are your thoughts about that?

No, I think you've got it. You're right on point. I can't say I have anything else to add to that. I like it. It get a point. I'll take it. So another thing that we learned from Irma that was very powerful for us and I think is also informing how we're thinking about this crisis is detachment. The idea of what really matters to us was literally like being alive and being together. And if we were alive and together and lost our house or lost our jobs or in my case my business or something changed or whatever, that we could start over no matter what, regardless of, you know, whatever unknowns we were facing at the time. And it was very difficult and I always tell people, I don't precisely have the exact words to describe the level of emotion that you feel when you board up your house. And this is my first house, right? Which is where we moved in when we first got married.





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I have a lot of emotional attachment to this house and the emotion that I felt when we boarded it up and drove away, not knowing if it would be standing when we got back and being willing to just say, whatever happens, happens. As long as we're together, we'll be okay. And that level of detachment, I think when we came back and of course we were so grateful that our house was here and that we could still get to live here and we love it and appreciate it so much. And I think we have an even higher degree of appreciation for what we have. But that level of detachment I think has informed really how we live our lives since that time forward. What was your experience with that?

Yeah, I agree. I'm a high functioning hoarder, a bit of a collector. I have my graphic novels and my video games that I've collected over the years and you know, they mean something to me and you know, I have to, so, you know, but when it came time to it, it's like, well, what's really important? You know, those are nice to have. Those were not must haves. The whole must have was you and me safe, laptops to have access to all our financial records and the online access to our pictures and you know, our memories that we've, you know, recorded electronically, digitally. Those were the important things. Everything else is just things and you know, I could walk away from them and it'd be fine.

Yeah. And I think that that's something that's so powerful to think about now as the world as we know it has just changing how it's functioning and how many things we were so attached to collectively as a society. Like this is the way we work, or this is the way we do things. And to think, you know what, what really matters is that we're alive to figure out whatever comes next. At the end of the day, right, no matter what circumstance we're going through, if we're alive to figure out what comes next, we can figure out what comes next. Would you agree with that? I agree. Yeah. Okay. Another lesson that we learned from Irma was following our intuition and







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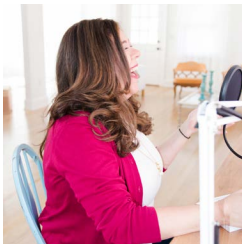
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really doing things that we felt were right for us that may not make sense to other people, regardless of what other people thought or what their judgments were.

And it really served us then, and I think it really serves us now. A lot of people, I talked to my clients and they also manage teams and all those kinds of things and they said, you know, they made decisions that might've been questioned that oh, I might be overreacting. And I remember one of my clients saying, I'd rather be judged for overreacting than underreacting. I'm totally okay with that. And I think listening to our intuition, checking in with what's the true goal and then seeing where intuition guides us according to that goal is something that's so, so powerful. And for us, what we saw with Irma is our house ended up being okay, but because we basically got in the car and kept driving until we got to Georgia, which if you've ever been to Florida, Florida is a very long state, very many hours in that car, but we did that. And because we did that, you were able to manage then a bunch of things for your company and your team remotely, which had we stayed in Florida with like no electricity and no wifi, all of these other things, had you not listened to your intuition, that would have been a very different scenario. So can you share a little bit about that?

Sure. Yeah, I mean, I definitely, you know, we didn't quite have that fully fleshed out that plan and what do we do and who to evacuate, who can evacuate and to where and how long, people just kind of took initiative on their own as we did, you know, if they felt it was needed. And it definitely was scary, you know, to be doing that without official sanction. But at the end of the day, when the hurricane hit, you know, we had some, we had some issues, at the office and that was, they would connect remotely and provide support and get us through it. Whereas the people who were literally three miles away, lost power or lost internet and they couldn't help the whole situation. So being close geographically would not have helped. And then I was able to guide





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the recovery and provide a lot of coordination, because we had food, water, power, internet, whereas, you know, other people were just struggling to feed their families or people who cannot get out of the neighborhoods for a week, you know, it didn't hit as bad as it could have, but it definitely was a significant impact. And following our intuition and, you know, led to very good outcome in that situation.

And so sometimes it's, it's challenging to trust ourselves when no one else sees what we see. And I think it's just this is such an important thing to remember. Even now, all of us listening to this, and you and I, as we go through this worldwide experience together, and we don't know how long it'll last and what it's gonna look like. There will be moments in time when we might feel very convicted about a particular course of action that nobody sees why it's important. And I just really want this moment to be a reminder to lean into what feels right for you. Check in with your priorities, check in with your partner and then lean into that. And one thing I've noticed, and I've it in my coaching clients in the last couple of weeks and you and I have been discussing also is we did a bunch of things recently that I'll explain now what they are, but it's almost as if we knew we were going to spend a lot of time at home.

And I find it really fascinating. So we used to be members of a gym and we found that we weren't going to the gym as much as we were before. So we decided to just get a couple of machines to have at home. And so we sort of set up a whole room where we set up our own little home gym and we just did a bunch of different things like that, that are so perfect for being at home now. And we were just following our intuition of what was right in front of us to do today, which I really invite you all to do is like whatever's in front of you to do today. Do that. Not so worried about, you know, all the days coming forward. It's just what's in front of you to do today? And I always think we have a little bit of our mind in the present and in the future and we





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did talk about the future in planning, but that essence of it may not make sense right now, but we're going to do it anyway 'cause it feels like the right thing to do has served us well over and over and over again.

That now I'm just convinced it's something that people should really take seriously. Do you have anything to add around that?

No, it's just that it is amazing how we just kind of, it's intuition and we've got so many things ready where we can be comfortably at home for a significant period of time and even stay healthy, work out, do all the things we need to do. Yeah. So that is kind of amazing.

Yeah, you guys, I just remembered this and I'm going to share this. We went shopping for an office chair for me, right. And we went shopping for this office chair and went to a bunch of different places and we saw this chair, like we went to like a used furniture store and they had this chair that was like 50 bucks and I sat in it, it was super comfortable and I thought we should buy this chair. And we ended up buying the chair and then we went to like Office Max or one of those places and then we had found this other chair that was like, oh that's like the master queen chair of life that I must own. So we had this \$50 chair, an office chair that you can sit in for eight hours and be comfortable and work in and we just bought it because it seemed like a good idea.

And then we just sort of left it in our sort of library, you know, the room where we have like all our books and stuff. We just let it sit there for several months. We didn't have a clear job for it. It wasn't like we bought it planning to do anything specific with it. It just seemed like a good idea. Who would have known that several months later my husband would be working from home





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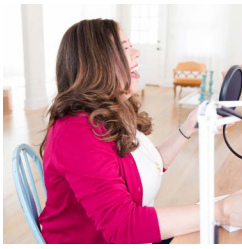
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and it would be super useful instead of being in a dining room chair to actually have an office chair? That just blows my mind that that is an example of what I want to tell you guys. Just listen to whatever's in front of you if it doesn't make sense, because we are so happy we have that chair now.

Yeah, okay good So those were some of the lessons that we learned just from preparing for Irma and how they informed a little bit of how we think about things. Now the next thing I want to talk about is cultivating partnership. So I always talk in the podcast, I refer it to episode one where we talked about the relationship table, the round table, not the square table with the three legs and the three legs are perspective, partnership and pleasure. And one of the things that we've been talking about this whole episode is perspective. Like how to look at things together in a more useful and more constructive way. And now that we have all this at home time together, we really are cultivating partnership. And as I talked to my clients, a lot of the ways that couples cultivate partnership are changing, right? Because you and I, for example, love to go to the movies, we love to go on dates, we love to travel, we love to plan trips.

We had to cancel a couple of upcoming trips because of this whole situation. And so the ways that we would normally sort of have adventures together and create memories together aren't really available to us at this moment, which for sure, let's be clear, is a luxury problem, right? Like, thank you Lord, that is a problem we have to solve, but we still have to solve it. Right? And so I thought it would be useful for us to talk a little bit about how we're creating containers for spending time apart, spending time together, like managing sort of this time together at home. So you kick it off and then I'll chime in. Okay. Well you may have to explain a little more what you mean by the concept of containers and then I'll jump in. So love it. See this is how it is behind the scenes.





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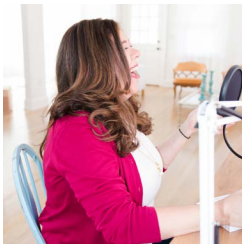
You guys, this is exactly how it is at home. So what I like to think of as container is literally we need spaces, mental spaces, emotional spaces to do things. Just the way that we need a container to put like a piece of cake in or to put some leftovers in. Like we need a container for fun. We need a container for communication or relaxation. We need to think about things in terms of how do I organize that in my mind. And the phrase I like to use is, oh, let's have a container for that. So for example, if I want to have sort of structured or unstructured fun time with my husband, one of our containers is we play board games and I love Scrabble and we experiment with a bunch of other games that we sort of rotate in and out of. And that's a container to sort of joke around and have fun and be lighthearted together and instead of a reliable activity that we know is sort of like guaranteed goodness. That's what I mean. Does that make sense? Do you have any questions about that? Cause if you have questions, so there you go. So cultivating partnership while at home. What are some of the things that you would say work for you or that you think are just useful for our listeners to know about?

Well, one we just kind of started developing recently, as we're both working from home in the past week, is kinda like having our own informal water cooler in the kitchen. So, 'cause normally you're working away in your office. I'm, you know, working away here at the dining room, you know, and I'm on conference calls, whatnot. We may, may not have chance to talk, but if we both go there and we'll have a glass of water, then you know, we know we both are on break and talk to each other, have a little chat and it's like an official, non-work moment.

So this isn't super fun you guys. So we, this happened, right? We were both in the kitchen at the same time and we were getting something to drink and we started chatting and my husband looked up to me and said, you know, you're my wife and now you're my work wife. And I just thought that was hilarious. And true. There you go. So that's something that we're doing is we're







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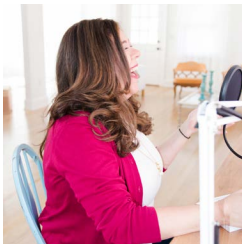
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having like our kitchen is now the office lunch room as well, super fun. That's where you get the water cooler gossip, what's happening. And then, so another thing we do is this is like, we're creating containers, kind of interesting. It's like we have a little patio and we'll eat dinner on the patio and we'll call it Casa Reyes like our own little restaurant, right? We meet and we say to each other like, what would you like to drink this evening, sir? And stuff like that. We really sort of add a lot of fun to it to distinguish it from any other night that we're eating at home.

He's nodding. That's a yes. The other thing that we do is there's an app called Pocket and I will put a link to Pocket in the show notes for everyone if you haven't heard of Pocket. It's basically an app where you can save a news article and you can sort of read it offline. Which is super useful just on its own. But one thing that we have been doing for probably a few years now is we will read an interesting article on Pocket and we'll save it and we'll send it to each other to read and we kind of know what each other is interested in. So sometimes we send each other, I don't know, we like the Avengers. So if there's a new Avengers news coming out or something and like that, he'll send me something and then I'll laugh because I'll say, well, you know, I know that already, right?

I'm well aware that this is happening. But sometimes I'm not aware, right? And I'm really delighted that he sent it to me too. So we joke around that one of our love languages is just sending each other articles on Pocket and then talking about them. Like then discussing it sort of a way to foster a conversation with each other about a wide variety of topics that sometimes are fun. Now we've gone from the Avengers to Corona virus articles and different things that we found out that we found useful for different reasons. What are your thoughts about that? I think it's such an interesting, very nerdy thing that we do. And here's a moment where I really want our listeners to think about this thing we do may not be what you do and that's totally okay, but





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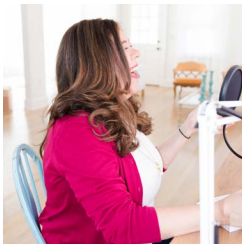
what's your version of this?

Yeah, I mean for us, we're both really big listeners and we like learning about the world and yeah, it's really fun to, you know, share interesting things that we come across and then, you know, get the other person's perspective on things that we find juicy and worth discussing. So, definitely it's good, keeps conversations fresh.

Yeah, I love that. Keeps conversations fresh. Now that is the perfect segue. Good job husband of mine to say this. There is a Questions for Couples Journal coming out on April 21st and all of you should buy it. Guess who wrote it? I have no idea who wrote it. No, we changed it. We've only been talking about it incessantly since like last year. But I think one of the things that we do is we don't expect to just have things to talk about. We cultivate creating that connection and giving each other things to talk about whether it's serious things or fun things and everything in the middle. We've talked about and we've shared articles about and we've talked about all kinds of different things happening in the world and happening in our world locally and worldwide and things like that. And so I love that the Questions for Couples book is going to do for people that I don't know what I do at home on a regular basis. I think it's awesome. I'll definitely link to that in the show notes so you can buy it. But do you have any thoughts you want to share about just cultivating conversation and my thought about it is not being an autopilot, like not assuming we're just going to have stuff to talk about cause we like each other. It's like we actually have them find the stuff to talk about.

I think your thoughts right on point. Yeah, you have to develop it. It's not just going to appear. No, I said we could go. So those were some of the things that we do to cultivate partnership during, at home time. So we will exercise. Just to give a little recap, we exercise together or not





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together sometimes depending on what we have going on. And we do the, the office check in at the kitchen. We do things like board games also, we watch movies and we make popcorn. Like we turn all the lights out in the house and we, you know, we'll make popcorn and pretend like it's a thing that's happening. And that's really what I call creating a container. So those are some of the things that we do. Anything else to add before we move on? Nope. Okay, perfect. So we wanted to share some practical tips about some of the things we're doing specifically for the coronavirus, which I think will just be useful forever. I really am having these thoughts that we'll never look at personal hygiene the same again as whatever happens after this initial moment is over. I think all of us will just look at things differently. I know at least I for sure will. So we've been doing some of our own sort of experimenting and figured finding our way with practical tips for us to stay safe and to help other people stay safe by, by removing ourselves from our usual day to day activities. So what do you want to start with, my love?

I think our grocery adventures from this weekend. Yeah, good point. Sure. So, yeah, like last weekend before things got really serious, I did the two trips, the grocery store stocked up on quite a lot of things, but I'm sure now, you know, things would get more hectic. We're both at risk, so we need to minimize exposure. So we were like, well, can we try ordering groceries to have them delivered to our house? So we worked on that and we tried a couple different products and solutions. We used Instacart for most of the things. We bought a few things at Amazon fresh. We looked at Shipt. Maybe we'll use that one next time, and that worked out really well. Like we got, you know, obviously there are things that are literally not available anywhere, that we were not able to get, but we were, you know, the goal now is kind of as much as possible once a week we restock. So it just, we maintain a good rotation that lasts us a few weeks if needed.





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And also one thing I want to mention is if you're able to, and I know a lot of you listening to me are able to, tip well, right? Like I just thought about this person who's going out and this is what it's like. This is the way this person is serving humanity right now. And by this person, you know, being able to make this delivery and make this trip, it's helping reduce the amount of people in the store and all of those things. And so I was like, let's just make sure that we really see, I think one thing I'm seeing is how interconnected we all are, how we really all depend on each other in ways I don't think we ever imagined before. And so thank you to every single Amazon delivery person, grocery shopping delivery person. Everyone who's out there just helping us stay home and reduce the risk for everyone else. I'm just so grateful. And those of us who can do things like tip well and things like that, I just really invite us to be mindful of that. Okay. So then, my techy, techy hubby also instituted video chat with family. So tell us a little bit about.

Yeah, yes just like, we're literally have the potential of not seeing family for weeks, with the situations. So we need to find out ways to connect it. So, you know, obviously we've had phone calls, but, and we've done in the past WhatsApp videos and stuff, but you know, for, to have real heart to heart conversations, it was time to upgrade. So they were trying to get everybody, you know, get used to using Zoom in our case. And you know, certainly there's other platforms out there. And it's very nice to be able to see and chat and almost feel, you know, like you were there, like you are in that person's home. So it's a way to visit without visiting. We do some physically physical distancing without the social distancing.

I think that's so important and I think it's physical distance distancing without emotional distancing. This is something we can be super close and not see each other. And what are the ways we cultivate that. So, with one of my friends, we just chatted like literally WhatsApped each other for, I don't know, an hour and she had kids running around her house and all this stuff,





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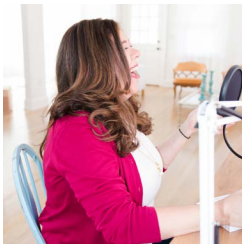
other stuff going on. And so it's like we couldn't do a phone call, but we were able to chat and it was great. Right. And so for everyone listening is like, what is your version of that? Whether it's a video chat with family, whether it's setting appointments, you know, to talk on the phone, what does that look like moving forward? Like this is the time to start thinking about it. And I think it's so important to be intentional about connection always.

I mean, that's definitely one of the themes of this podcast forever. And I remember I have a really close knit group of friends. There's four of us that get together like once a month and we always have lunch and we've been doing it for, I want to say three or four years now. And so now we're just going to do that same thing but on Zoom and just still be emotionally connected even though we're not physically connected. So another thing that we did was we went for a walk at 10 o'clock at night when no one was out. And why do you think that was important? Or what do you want to share about that? He's laughing again.

First it's really good to avoid getting cabin fever. So I, you know, it's good to get some fresh air once in a while. Yep. And yeah, I mean, getting exercise, you're getting fresh air, and you know, as long as you're, you know, maintaining your distance from other people. And in this case there was literally no one is around and you're safe. So don't get it to a point where you didn't have to go into like an underground bunker and never see light of day cause it's not at that level. Yeah. So I think for me, my take away is just be thoughtful about how you go outside and when you go outside and what that looks like. And in some places, in some cities people are advised this is not the time to even be outside. So if that's where you are in this moment, you know, this is a situation that's unprecedented and that we just don't know. The right thing to do changes sometimes from hour to hour and from day to day. And so we just have to be mindful of that and really be mindful to just roll with the punches. And it's also like if we made a mistake or we







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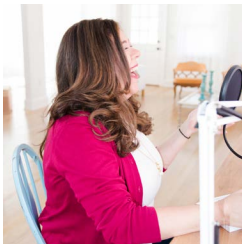
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did something that now is not advised, it's the moment to hold ourselves with also grace and say we're all doing the best we can right now.

Awesome. So the next thing we wanted to talk about is something we've been thinking about is what is the weakest link? And I think this is good for any situation always. And especially in a crisis or in a situation where you need to, you know, whether you're protecting your life or protecting yourself in some way, like what is the weakest thing? So obviously the things that are in our home already are not infected. And what would the weakest link would be is anything that's new that comes into our home. So when we did the grocery run that was done for us, thank you so much to that person who did it for us. We, my brilliant, brilliant husband with his engineering mind set up a protocol. So will you share your protocol with the world today? Okay. Okay. Well, I mean, I just read it, I didn't institute it, so I can't take credit for inventing it or anything, but basically, yeah, everything that that's coming in has to be removed from its original packaging, disinfected. So we kind of set up an area aside where everything comes in, we unpack it right there. If like in the case of food, you know, things like that, then, you know, we want to take it out from the original packaging, putting in our own packaging, , wipe it down with Lysol, you know, discard all the materials so that you're not in contact with it after we've got you've taken everything out. And do a good hand washing, which is, you know, just a standard thing that we ought to do now. And at that point, you know, everything's secure inside your house, decontaminated and you're safe.

That's brilliant. So thank you for reading that article. I haven't even read that article. I was just like, this is awesome. We should do this always. And I think it also gives an actual sense of safety. Like, I don't have to be worried when I opened the milk carton or something. Could this be dangerous? It's already been wiped down. It's already been disinfected. We know it's safe. And





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that's, to me, when I think about what is the weakest link, that was just, just a useful lens to look at. What do we need to order? And I, we talked about recently consolidating orders, like instead of, I don't know, I don't know about you guys, but I've gotten into this habit where I think of something I want, I just order it from Amazon, because I can, and now I'm much more thoughtful to say I'm going to combine a bunch of things that I need at one time and I'm going to have one order that I then disinfect, sort of process, go through the protocol with, and then I'm complete with that. Awesome. So that's one of the things we did. And then another thing we did is we have a cleaning lady who has been our cleaning lady since we got married. So she's been our cleaning lady for 13 years. She's a valued person that we love. And we asked her not to come, right? For many reasons, for her own safety, for her own health. And also it just felt like the right thing to do. And then we talked about just paying her anyway. And how would we do that? What would be the logistics of that? Whether it's sending a PayPal or in our case, we just like mailed her a check from the bank, so we never touched the check. It's just generated electronically from the bank and it just goes directly to her. And if you have people in your life that are, you know, your vendors or your support team, really think about what you can do for them in this time.

In our case, you know, she comes every couple of weeks and we can pay her and we're so grateful to be able to do something like that. But it's also the more we circulate money in the economy, the better it is for everyone. If we can right? A lot of people listening to us are going to be in a variety of situations where you can, or you have to change what you're doing. But those of us who can, this is really at every level, both economically, physically from a health perspective, those of us who can protect another person and help another person, this is a call to do just that in every way that we can. So that was one example of something that we really thoughtful about. How do we handle this? It's like she shouldn't come. It's not good for her. It's





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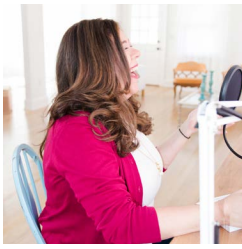
not good for us. Let's minimize that. But then how do we handle that? What is the effect of that decision then on her? Do you have anything to add?

Okay, good. Thank you. So now one last thing I wanted to talk about is last night we were talking about what helps you stay so calm and centered when there's so much change around you. And I just loved your answer and I wanted to share it with all our listeners today. You mentioned focusing on what you can control and how worry really isn't helpful. And I'd love for you to just share your perspective on that. I think it'll just be so helpful to so many people. Like once you've identified the issue in this case, you know, one of our situation we're in and what you can do then execute those things. You know, you do the things in your control to minimize risk for yourself and those around you. And then you have to give up the rest. You know, it's, the rest is up to God. It's out of your hands. So worrying about it, about things you can't control is not going to do anything other than, you know, reduce your psychological health. So you just have to learn to let things go that are outside of your control. To me it's as simple as that. But I know for other people that you, they just keep worrying and you know, running the same thoughts inside their heads and that can be a challenge.

What is the thought that you have? You know, you're explaining kind of how you approach it, but is it that it's not useful? Is that, is it as simple as that it's like, it's not useful for me to worry about this so I'm not gonna worry about this? Or are there some other thoughts sort of running through your head that help you cope?

I don't think I even had to think of it. I mean, for me, I guess it's just comes more naturally. I just, I have, I done all the things that I could do, have, you know, have I thought about, because when I don't have it figured out, I will literally wake up at four in the morning and my, my subconscious





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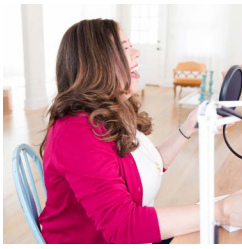
will be working out how to solve a problem, how to address the situation. But once I've got it figured out and I've executed, then I'm done. And I just don't worry about it.

I love it. So I think that's it. It's like, have I done everything I could for today? It's a great question. You guys who've listened to the show all the time know I love questions. I have an episode on power questions. I'm always inviting you guys, even at the beginning of this show, to ask a more powerful question. You'll get a more powerful answer. You'll live a more powerful life. And that is such a good question is have I done, what was mine to do today? Have I done what I could contribute or what I could do about this issue right now? And if I have, I'm done. Right? Yes.

And I think that's such an amazing way to look at it because sometimes we feel we should be doing more all the time, but then we stress ourselves out, we burn ourselves out, we get, we feel overwhelmed. And it's like, what can I do today like this? If there's any time in history to really focus on today, it is now. This is what I can do today. Tomorrow I'll do what I could do tomorrow. Yeah. I think that's great. Thank you so much for sharing that. I think it's so useful. And my last question is, do you have one last piece of advice before we sign off today or and, how about two questions. Do you have any funny anecdotes about being married to a life coach? I'm sure all of our listeners would be delighted to hear from you on anything like that.

I think I could prepare a few, a few anecdotes for that one. But, the last piece of advice wise, one thing that comes to mind is, you know, this is a challenging period for all of humanity. And I think we need to operate with love, compassion, grace. You know, people are stressed out, people are scared. They're dealing with something that we've never dealt with as a society before. Not everybody reacts the same way to stressful situations. So people have, you know, parents to worry about, or they're, they have children running around screaming while they're trying to





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focus on work. So just be more compassionate for people. Don't be, you know, be kind, it would be my advice.

I love that. And it's really having the intention to be kind. I think that if we think about even for us as a couple and for couples who need to manage spending more time together, what we said earlier about like choosing to be the bigger person, it's like choose that kindness matters more in this moment even than efficiency, right? It might be more efficient to tell somebody, you know, shut up or I'm working or who knows what. Right? But in this moment, kindness, and I mean always, but especially now, you know, kindness is kind of like, but going back to what are your priorities? What is your priority? Is your priority a thriving marriage? Is your priority, a thriving family? And then where, what is the role of kindness? If that is your priority, where does kindness fit in? And then it becomes super easy. So decide how to handle things when you're clear on that. So thank you. That's so beautiful, wonderful. So thank you so much husband of mine, for joining us. My pleasure. Well, so you'll come back, 'cause I'm sure people will want to hear you. You know where to find me, have your people call my people. We're each other's person, literally. So that's a wrap for this episode of The Marriage Life Coach Podcast. If you found this episode useful for you, please share it. Let's help as many marriages as we can manage stressful situations together better as a team. And always remember, you need three things to have a thriving, five-star marriage perspective, partnership and pleasure. And they are all in your control.

