



## EPISODE 16: TEAM VS. ALLIANCE

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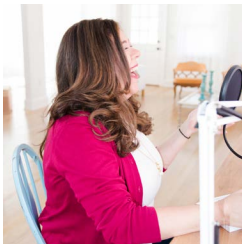
Hello and welcome everyone. I am so excited to share this episode with you today. I am feeling so much gratitude that I get to record a podcast that I know you are out there listening and applying these ideas and concepts and making your marriages better and I have the most fun story to share about the podcast and I'm going to use a swear word today heads up in case you have little ones around. I don't usually swear, but I will be quoting someone so it's time for headsets now. Okay, here's the story. I have a listener who reached out to me to tell me she listened to the episode on how to use the five whys to get to the root cause of any problem and she listened to that episode and then an issue came up with her hubby and instead of fighting about it, she got super curious and kept asking questions and they were able to resolve it calmly.

And then she wrote me this about how it went with her husband. Here's what she said at the end of our discussion where we use the five why's, we came to some good conclusions. He looked at me and said, did you just use some voodoo shit on me? What just happened? Listen up people, it is not voodoo. It is not magic. It is not a secret godmothers spell. It is life coaching, but I love this quote from science fiction writer Arthur C. Clark. He says, any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic and that is really how I feel about coaching.

Sometimes technology is just a practical application of knowledge, especially in a particular area. And what I'm teaching you all is like applied relationship science and when you go out into the world and you use it, it can feel like magic to us or to our husbands, but it isn't.

Okay, you can take off the headsets now. There will be no more swearing in this episode. Okay, so today we're going to help you make your marriage stronger by understanding the difference between a team and an alliance. Remember back at episode one we talked about how partnership is one of the three legs of the relationship table. You have to have perspective,





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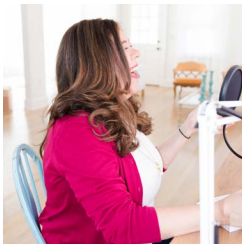
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partnership and pleasure. If one of those things is missing, the table falls down. So in order to have a strong marriage, you must have a strong partnership, but sometimes we forget that. So I'm going to explain the difference between those two things, between a team and an alliance. And I'm also going to share three mindset shifts, really specific shifts that you can make in order to cultivate more team spirit once you understand the critical differences between the two. So let's dive right in.

First, what is the difference between a team and an alliance and how does that apply to your relationship? The simplest definition of a team is a group of people working together. We all know that, right? The interesting thing about a team when you dig a little deeper is how we came to associate the word team with groups of people working together towards a common goal. It actually came from animals harnessed to the same vehicle, working together to go in the same direction. So my husband and I are in the middle of watching Poldark now. And so the image that came to my mind was like a horse and carriage, like where you have the two horses, they're harnessed to the same vehicle and they're both working together to go in the same direction. So have that image. Now we have developed very fancy detailed descriptions of what teams are, but that's the original meaning that it came from, which I think is fascinating.

So my favorite current sort of modern definition of a team comes from [businessdictionary.com](https://www.businessdictionary.com) and it's a group of people with a full set of complimentary skills required to complete a task or a job or your project. And team members have four sort of elements. They operate with a high degree of interdependence. They share authority and responsibility for self management. They are accountable for the collective performance of the team and they work towards a common goal and shared rewards. I think that definition is so good. We can totally apply that to a marriage. A team becomes more than just a collection of people when a strong sense of mutual commitment creates synergy. This is back to the [businessdictionary.com](https://www.businessdictionary.com) definition a team





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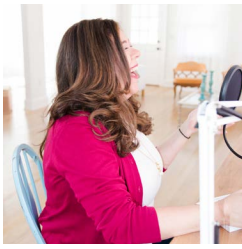
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becomes more than just a collection of people when a strong sense of mutual commitment creates synergy, thus generating performance greater than the sum of the performance of its individual members.

So if you think back to the horse and carriage example, two horses pulling the carriage together can pull more people in the carriage and probably go faster and be more efficient. So it's greater than the sum of its individual members. Keep that one in your back pocket while we turn to looking at the meaning of an Alliance. Just keep team right there, ready to go. Okay, so an alliance is also a group of people working together usually to advance common interests, but it has a different definition. An alliance, in Merriam Webster's dictionary is defined as an association to further the common interests of the members. Okay, to further the common interest of the members. So what's the difference between a team and an Alliance that can really transform your marriage when you fully fully understand it? In a team, we're working towards a common goal. We're pulling in the same direction.

We're going to the same place. We're relying on each other to pull what we can to keep that marriage cart moving forward. In an alliance, I am a country and your're country, we have priorities. Sometimes they merge, we negotiate treaties that give us benefits may be dishes are washed, sexy times are planned. My priorities in your priorities occasionally merge, but we are each driving our own carts to our own locations. So the example I like to give when I explain this to my private coaching clients is think about the LA Lakers winning championships. There is a team spirit. They find which team members strengths, which team members weaknesses they need to solve for. They help each other grow the strengths. They help each other solve for the weaknesses, and they go out and they win games together as a united front with one goal. Now an Alliance, think about something like France, and the UK, right?





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France wants, I don't know, pens and pencils, and if they have a surplus of them, they're happy to give some to the UK and sell them to them and a fair price and everybody agrees. Priorities merged, everybody's happy. But let's see that France has a shortage of pens and pencils and no longer wants to sell them so longer in their best interest, even though the UK still needs pens and pencils right? Now, that alliance, they're not a team. They're not pulling necessarily towards the same goal, pulling towards winning the championship like the LA Lakers are. And so what happens is that alliance is dissolved when the priorities aren't the same. Okay? That's how I like to explain it. And usually it's too easy to understand the difference between two countries that form an alliance, when their priorities are similar and how that alliance can so easily dissolve and the priorities change versus a team that works together always towards the same goal, always helping each other get there.

Okay. Now take a minute to think about the marriages you personally know, the people in your sphere, the people that you like see all the time, and I bet you will take you less than a minute to categorize them as either teams or alliances. Which ones would you label a strong marriage which was you think are the happiest? Think about that now. I don't have any scientific basis for this. This is like a hypothesis that I have sometimes they quote different scientific studies to you. This one is kind of like I'm seeing this happen anecdotally in the people that I know and the people that I talked to and it's the hypothesis that I have that teams are much happier than alliances. Okay, all of the happiest marriages I personally know. They act as a team. They have a common goal. They're in it to win it, they're a team together, that kind of thing.

All of the marriages that I know that work is alliances they're okay. Right? They might not be in dire straits. They get along. Things are fine. Things are not five-star though. That's a two star, or three star. If you remember my analogy to a five star marriage, things are okay. They function right. Clothes gets washed, mortgages get paid. Now, if I had a choice between being fine





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and being happy, right between being two star or five-star, I would choose happy every time. Right? Now, why did teams work better than alliances? Right? That's very simple. One thing is that teams stay married and when you stay married and that marriage is happy and it thrives, there's all kinds of research that shows that you live longer, you're healthier during the time that you're alive, you make more money and you have better sex. Literally all the good things now, no research has been done and whether you eat more chocolate or anything like that, but I bet that it tastes better too because the happier you are, the happier everything around you feels.

Now, alliances are what I think of when I read the statistics about gray divorce. Now, I don't know if you've heard of this, but it's a very fascinating phenomenon that's happening. We're divorced. Rates are going down for almost everyone except people in the U S who are 50 and over are getting divorced at a higher rate than ever before. Now there are probably a thousand different reasons, but if you ask me, my gut says it's probably because they were working as alliances and not as teams. They wanted the kids raised and the mortgage paid and now that those goals are completed, they have no strong reason to stay together. They were like two countries with a treaty each with their own priorities and allied only when those priorities aligned. Now agreed, divorce is too new for there to be really significant research on it, but we know the cost.

Divorce is steep both emotionally and financially. It is absolutely sometimes the best decision to make no argument or judgment on that. I always say that I'm one of the world's foremost marriage advocates. I think marriage is amazing and a wonderful lab to grow as a person, as a human, and to spiritually evolve and I also believe that sometimes the highest and best outcome for our relationship is for it to end right. Both of those things can be true. Now my stance is if you are married and you love your spouse and you can take positive action in your own behalf to create a strong marriage or to make your marriage stronger and better now and you can be happy and thriving in that relationship, then everybody wins, right? So it's like if







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you're going to be married, make it as awesome as you can make it.

Which brings me back to teams and alliances. Think for a moment right now about the state of your relationship today. Are you working as a team or are you functioning more like an alliance? There isn't anything really inherently wrong with either of those. There's just the awareness of how you're relating to each other and your level of satisfaction with how that is going. So are you a team or are you in alliance and do you like how that is working for you? If you like how it's working, good to go. Keep going all as well. If you want to transition from an alliance to a team, where do you start? Of course I'm going to tell you I am a life coach. This is The Marriage Life Coach Podcast. I am not going to end it on a cliffhanger. I think that would be kind of funny.

I might end it on a cliffhanger someday, but not today. So here's where you start. You start with your mindset about your marriage. If you remember the relationship table perspective comes first, perspective, partnership and pleasure. You need all three things. So you start by thinking then feeling then doing and that really is how all of life works. You think first, then you have a feeling about how you think a good one or a bad one doesn't matter. Either one is going to propel you into action and then you act based on that feeling. So if we want to change what we're doing, we start by changing what we are thinking. So here are the three mindset shifts for a strong marriage to really create more of a team spirit that I promised right at the beginning of this episode. The first one is how are we already working as a team?

Look for evidence where your goals are already common goals and you're already experiencing team spirit. It might be how you handle kids or your love of baseball or superheroes. You know, I love superheroes at my house. Notice how it feels when you're pulling that metaphorical cart together. Really savor that feeling and then ask yourself where else can we work as a team. So so useful, and the mindset behind that is we already have what we need to be even closer, more





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connected, and feel even more loved and loving. If you're working as a team in any area of your marriage, all you need to do is expand that to more areas of your marriage. The next mindset shift is do you have common goals? Have you shared your dreams? Do you regularly share them? It is so easy to get stuck in the routine of day to day life and to forget to dream.

One of the reasons that one of the categories in The Questions For Couples Journal that I've been talking about through all these episodes, it just came out April 21st of 2020, is goals and dreams. There's a whole category on goals and dreams to remind you and your partner no matter what's happening around you right now that we still want to have a vision for the future and then we want to create that vision together. And it's not usually something you sort of come home and say, Hey, let's dream now. It's not that natural thing, like automatically think about on any given Tuesday. So I like to give you reminders right from this episode and from those sections in the book. So are you sharing your dreams and are you creating common goals as you move forward? Nothing makes a team come together faster than a nice juicy dream to pursue together.

Whether it's a dream vacation, whether it's your dream house, whether it's having a great adventure, anything like that. Can you start a conversation about dreams this week? If that feels awkward, get the questions for couples journal that I'll give you some prompts to get started. Start where you are with what you have right now is always my guidance to you. The smallest, simplest version of talking about a dream is a great place to start. And the mindset is we can start where we are now. No matter how far we have to go, it's possible to start and it can feel so good to share our hopes and wishes. Okay. The next one, what does a team look like and feel like to me? How can I bring more of that into my marriage today? So it's as simple as whatever's in front of you right now that you're dealing with in your relationship.

If you were a team acting together to solve that issue, what would that look like? Right? And





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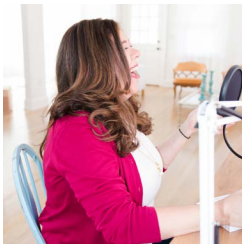
you do not have to embark on a huge production and go until your husband. Now we shall commence team protocols. You know what to do, anything like that. Although that would be fun. And if you do, please tell me, you can write to me at [hello@maggiereyes.com](mailto:hello@maggiereyes.com) I would love to hear. But you do not have to do that. You do not have to produce a Hollywood blockbuster here. You can simply decide what a team looks like and feels like to you and start thinking and feeling and acting more team-ly. So I don't think that's a word, but I thought it was fun. So we're just going to call it team-ly, am I being team-ly right now? And the mindset behind that is it get to decide how I feel and what a team looks like in my life.

I can take action to bring that feeling of team spirit to my day today and every day. So there you have it. Teams and alliances, really understanding the difference between the two can absolutely transform your relationship and I really highly, highly recommend that you adopt those mindsets and that you see what happens. Don't just listen to the podcast, go out and test it and see what happens. Okay, now I'm so delighted to share another client celebration with you. This is from a client, Amanda. Here's what she wanted to share about her experience in working with me as her coach. I first reached out to Maggie after watching her Better Marriage Masterclass and falling in love with her process right away, identified with how she described the marriage of a type A woman to a type B man and I knew we needed some help. I wanted to reestablish a close and fun relationship with my husband.

I felt like somewhere over the last 17 years, the fun and connection went away and I desperately wanted it back. I knew that it had to start with me and my mindset and with Maggie's coaching, our relationship is back on track. I now approach my relationship with the gentleness that I would never have been able to access without her help. I'm able to be grateful for the things he does right and work productively on the things that irritate or annoy me. In doing that, we are closer than ever and this magical thing happened. The harder I tried, the harder he tried.







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Maggie is a joy to work with, enthusiastic, loving, and kind. I have nothing but the best things to say about this phenomenal coach. Thank you so much Amanda. That was so beautiful to read and to experience with you and I just send you a big, big, big hug.

Okay. One of my favorite things that happens with clients is something that Amanda also described so beautifully is she started with her mindset and then as she says, this magical thing happened. Remember science sufficiency, advanced looks like magic but it isn't so this magical seeming thing happened. The harder she tried, the harder he tried and when that happens it can really feel like magic. But this is really a very simple hypothesis we have in psychology which is called systems theory and it goes like this. When one element in the system changes, the other elements in the system respond to that change. I like to joke with my clients that it's like when a butterfly flaps its wings in Brazil, you have hot sex on Tuesday and there's something super important there to point out because I know a lot of you listening to me have tried a bunch of things already and so it's important to be trying the right combination of things.

You cannot make chocolate cake without chocolate. You cannot fan the flames of love if what you're putting into the oven is resentment and disappointment. We have to cook with the right ingredients to get the result we want. This is my mindset about everything I teach on the podcast. I want all of you cooking with the right combination of things and if you want to work with me one on one and have been thinking about doing it for awhile, I strongly encourage you to reach out now. Okay? Remember, teamwork makes the dream work. Now go make your team stronger this week.

