



EPISODE 26: RELATIONSHIP MASTERY PART 1

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/26](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/26)

Hey, everyone. I'm so excited to share the next two episodes with you. These are some of my favorite lessons from one of the most influential mentors in my life, Brooke Castillo. She is the founder of Life Coach School, which is where I trained as a coach. And I am a big believer in continuing education. And I've done trainings with many of my favorite thought leaders in the relationship and marriage space. Like the Gottman Institute, the legendary Michele Weiner-Davis, the amazing Esther Perel and I'm working on right now.

I'm finishing an additional certification with the Tantric Institute For Integrated Sexuality, which is so fun. I always share with my clients, the concepts that I've developed along with some of my favorite concepts from my mentors and teachers. And today I want to do a deep dive into some of the most important concepts that really are foundational to what I teach about healthy marriages.

So here's, what's going to happen today. I have reviewed over 200 episodes of The Life Coach School Podcast. I picked out nine episodes that cover nine principles, which will absolutely transform all of your relationships, not just your marriage. If you squeeze the wisdom out of them, like we are going to do today together and make some delicious relationship juice with them. Sometimes I crack myself up and this is one of those times. So here's what we're going to do.

We're going to talk about four of them today and five of them in the next episode, I'm going to list them for you each principle. So you know exactly what to expect. Then I'm going to share a bit about how I use that principle in my coaching practice, where as you know, I help high achieving women create thriving five-star marriages. And I'm going to tell you where I see some of my clients get stuck, which by the way, maybe where you get stuck.





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And I'm also going to share exactly which episode of Brooke's Life Coach School Podcast does a deep dive into each of these principles. So you can listen to those. If you want to go even deeper. Now, I know some of you might be listening to this episode as you are out and about on your day. And I highly encourage you to listen to this episode once, then come back to it with a pen and paper or your laptop, listen to it again and take notes.

And from those notes, pick one, maybe two things, three things maximum that you're going to take action on this week, not later, now. My clients who get the fast results are always the action takers. They change their thoughts. They change how they're approaching a situation. They adjust their perspective, and then they take action on their new perspective. So I really challenge you to do that.

I absolutely loved when Brooke taught me that you don't read a book, you do a book that was a life changing sentence for me. Sometimes one sentence can be life changing. It's the stuff that we implement that makes the biggest difference in our lives. So when it came time to work on my own book, which is The Questions For Couples Journal, one of the things I loved that really drew me to that project was knowing that it's a book that you do, not a book that you read. It really felt like a, such a full circle moment for that to be my very first book. So just like Brooke taught me that about books. I'm telling you today, don't just listen to this podcast, do this podcast.

Okay, great. Now you're ready. Here are the first four principles that if you choose to practice consistently will absolutely give you relationship mastery at a whole new level. And even as you listen through and think you might be pretty good at some of them now, I'm absolutely sure there was something in this podcast today that will help you move forward, feel more powerful,





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feel more loving and more connected in your relationships, you can love bigger and deeper and with more passion than before you heard this episode today.

Now, as you know, I talk and teach about marriage all day, every day, but as you may not know, my background is in human resources. So today we're not just going to talk about your romantic relationships or your family relationships, but all of them, whether at home or at work, I really love to make my examples super relatable.

So we're going to mix in a little bit of everything so that whichever relationship is causing you stress right now, you will have a strategy for, by the time you finish listening to this episode. Okay? First, before we dive into the first four, we're going to go through the list of all the nine that we're going to do over this episode. And the next one. And I started my coaching business with blogging.

I wrote a blog called Modern Marred, it's retired now. If you go to [MaggieReyes.com](https://maggiereyes.com) you can still see all the articles, but I have written over 150 articles and I have never met a listicle that I didn't like. So today we have a podcast-ickle for you right now. Yes, I made up that word. And here it is, it's The Nine Principles of Relationship Mastery from Brooke Castillo and The Life Coach School Podcast.

Here we go. Principle number one is acceptance. You've heard me talk about this on the podcast before we're going to talk about it again. It's so important. Principle number two is boundaries. Principle number three is really learning the art of self coaching. Principle number four is called manuals, and this will make complete sense when I explain it, I promise. Principle number five is passion, and we can't have an episode about relationships about passion





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now, can we. Principle six is generosity. Seven is how to be a good mate. And eight is difficult conversations. And principle number nine is called being coached. And you know, you're listening to The Marriage Life Coach Podcast, talking about The Life Coach School Podcast. So, you know, we're going to talk about being coached. So look forward to that one, that'll be in the next step. So those are the ones we're going to talk about.

Let's dig in with principle number one, acceptance. Why do we start here? Because most of us, and I include myself, just love to argue with reality. And when we are busy, arguing with reality, what happens is we can not impacted in any meaningful way. The way this shows up for me with my clients is when everything their husband does is wrong. I work with a lot of ladies married to husbands, but the same is true if you're a hubby making your wife wrong. If your wife have you this episode to listen to. So the way they put away the dishes, the way they clean the living room, their kisses are too long. Their hugs are too short. You get the idea, everything is wrong.

If you think of work situations, it can be that coworker or that boss who doesn't give feedback or gives too much feedback or writes one word emails or writes essays when all you need is just one word to keep going. You get the idea. Whatever that other person over there is doing is wrong. It's never, you. It's never me. It's never us. It's always about them, but you are the one who is stressed out about it. Okay, think about that. They're doing it wrong, but you're the one who is stressed out about it. That is not a good recipe for success, right?

So Brooke talks about this in depth in episode 99 of The Life Coach School Podcast. And we will link to all of these in the show notes, so don't worry about remembering the episode number or the title of the episode. I will make sure you have that in the show notes. But she talks about





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acceptance requires effort in episode 99 of her podcast. And here's what she says about it. I'm going to quote her.

I want you to consider accepting other adults and their behavior. Always. What if you could always accept because here's the thing. A lot of you are saying, well, I'm not going to consent to what other people do. But where has you're not accepting gotten you anything? Have you been able to control that person's behavior? No! When you accept someone's behavior, it doesn't mean you have to stay.

It doesn't mean you have to applaud. It doesn't mean you have to tell them, hey, this is great to keep doing it. What if you just accepted that adults get to behave, how they want to behave. That adults get to be who they want to be. Adults get to do whatever it is they want to do without your input. What if you just genuinely accepted that. So that's what Brooke had to say about it. And I think that is a great question.

Are you willing to put in the effort to accept those things, right? What happens is when you are able to accept reality as it is right now, whether it's something you choose to like or not, you get back all that energy that you were using to argue. And now you can use that energy to transform your experience of the situation with your thinking. You remember that quote, that science sufficiently advanced is indistinguishable from magic. It's one of my favorite quotes.

This is like applied science to the 10th degree. Your circumstances don't necessarily change, but you feel totally different about them and you are not a prisoner to them anymore. Okay? Here's my acceptance hack for all of you today. This was inspired by one of my awesome clients who got annoyed pretty much every time she saw her husband for different reasons. And I gave her





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this homework and now I'm giving it to you for homework.

So here's what you do. Think of the most annoying person in your life right now, who you love, who you want to have a relationship with. Right? If there's somebody in your life right now that you don't want to have a relationship with. You don't have to have a relationship with them. Right? But use this with someone you genuinely care about and want to find a way to move forward with. Okay. So here we go. It could be someone in your inner circle. It could be someone at work, at home. Think of that person and whatever they're doing right now, you add, and it's okay, to the end of the sentence. So from my client example, it was he's washing the dishes wrong and it's okay. He's trying to fix something in the kitchen. He's doing it wrong. It's okay. He's just standing there, and it's okay.

All day long, everything they do, and it's okay, over and over and over and over again. Here is what you will notice, if you do this for one day with that person and you can do it for a week, you can do it for a month. You can do it as long as you need to do it, to learn everything you can learn from the experience. Here's what to expect though. You will notice all the ways you have been judging that person.

And you will notice how often even the most unimportant things that they do, you have been labeling as wrong. When we have a person that we're constantly labeling as wrong. We are literally, maybe not literally. We are metaphorically rejecting them all day long. Now, imagine if someone rejecting you all day long, that would not feel good. You would not be delighted. Yet, that is a very often what we do with the people we love the most. Okay? Now you always have a choice. You can choose to continue rejecting them, or you can choose to accept them. If you haven't done that in a long time, it might feel really awkward and woobly and messy and





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uncomfortable, which is totally okay. Since you might not remember how to do it, I wanted to include this acceptance hack.

That you can go back to any time that you're feeling disconnected from someone that you want to feel connected to, and just think about them. Look at them and remember things about them over and over again, name what they're doing or being, or saying, and add, and that's okay to the end and then see how you feel at the end of the day. Sometimes you will notice it really is okay.

And you can gain an acceptance level, kind of like a video game. Other times you will notice all the ways you're feeling that it's not okay. And that's also a good result for this exercise. You can take what you notice and ask yourself, how important is it in your life? Do you want to keep that perspective or do you want to change it. Regardless, you will be seeing clearly what you're accepting and rejecting. And most importantly, you'll be owning your power to make a choice.

Now, since I work with marriage, one of the things that I talk about all the time is how I see acceptance and boundaries as a pair, which is why we're going to talk about boundaries next. Acceptance does not mean you let people walk all over you. That is not the goal. So pay close attention now. Acceptance and boundaries go together like a right shoe and a left shoe. You can practice the deepest and widest acceptance of another human being when your boundaries are clear and when your emotional space is clean. So imagine that you have a fence around your heart and you can open that fence and close that fence whenever you want. Most people don't have a fence. They either have very tall walls or nothing so that either nothing gets through the walls or everything gets through.





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And there's no space for them to have their own clean, clear, beautiful grassy space of magical love and healing. Now, when you put up this imaginary fence, you are telling not just the world, but yourself, what you're willing to accept, what goes in this space, what can not enter this space. And then let's say someone throws a party outside your fence. On the other side of the road, you can go, you can join the party.

You can have a good time. And when you're done, you come back home, you close your fence and you have a great night because there's no confusion about who's throwing the party, you don't have to pick up any cops or have any mess to put away. They put their own mess away and you own the land inside your heart. Brooke does such a great job of explaining how boundaries work in episode 12 of The Life Coach School Podcast.

And here's what she says. Make sure that you recognize the only time you set a boundary with someone is when there is a boundary violation. Someone has come in your property and is violating it in some way, either emotionally or physically. And only then, do you set a proper boundary by making a request to someone and having a consequence that you are a hundred percent willing to follow through on with love and with peace.

If you're able to do this, it will increase the intimacy in your life. It will increase the authenticity and honesty in your life. If you're willing to have enough courage to honor yourself, tell the truth and ultimately protect yourself from any boundary violation. That is how Brooke explains it. Here's what I want you to remember about boundaries. A boundary is always about your behavior.

It is always about what you will do. The other person is fully being themselves and you are fully





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being yourself because of boundaries about your behavior. You are a hundred percent in control of enforcing that boundary and closing that emotional fence or opening it up depending on the situation. If someone else has to do something for the boundary to be completed, you are doing it wrong. And that is not a boundary. It is so important to really understand this fully.

In episode 12, Brooke mentions the example of smoking. If you smoke, I will leave the table. I complete the boundary through my action of leaving the table. You are the one who completes the boundary, always. The other person has a choice in the middle. Their choices, never at the end. So she has a ton of examples in that episode about that. And again, I'll link to that in show notes for you.

But I think that's super clear. I love the leaving the table example. Now I remember acceptance and boundaries, the right and left shoe of a peaceful heart. You need both of them to balance each other out. So imagine trying to walk around the world, either with no shoes on, oh my gosh, you would get so many injuries. That'd be so dangerous. Infections, all the things right. Catastrophe, would be bad.

Imagine trying to walk around the world with one shoe on, but not the other, right. That would also not work. So if you're feeling any kind of pain in your relationships right now, take a look at your emotional shoes. One of them, or both of them might be missing. Okay, next step, we get to talk about the self coaching model. This is one of my favorite coaching tools. I use it with all my clients. I will do a whole separate episode on the model another day. Today, I'll just give you a very brief overview so you can get familiar with it.

Now, something that Brooke and The Life Coach School has done so brilliantly with this coaching





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tool is to take deep psychological concepts, distill them to their essence and make them super easy to use and super easy to implement for anyone, which is one of the reasons I love this tool so much. My thought about it is the easier something is to use, the more likely you are to do it, the more likely you are to do it, the better your relationships become, the better your relationships are. Everybody in the world benefits, right? The more love we put in the world, the more the world can heal.

Okay. So thinking clearly is so important because clear thinking becomes confident, compassionate, conscious thinking, which automatically elevates the quality of all of our actions and the results and outcomes we create in our lives. A lot of times clients will come to me for help with their relationship and they want to get to the juicy stuff. First, let's talk about our dreams. Let's have more or better sex. Let's relight the spark. And I am for all of those things. However, we start with clear thinking. The process of self coaching using the model is simple. We do what we call a thought download. That's basically writing down what we're thinking.

And it's as simple as stream of consciousness, like five minute journaling, just to discover what's on our minds right now. And which of those thoughts are holding us back from the awesome that we want to create in our lives. Once we download what we're thinking, we pick a thought to process. We want to look at it. And the way I like to describe the model is it's a tool for awareness to see what we have created in our lives. And it's a tool for creation to help us create the results we want in our life. So it's kind of like, if you think of a Swiss army knife, it's a good tool that has multiple uses. And we can decide depending on the situation that we're looking at, which way we want to use it.

Here are the components of the model. There are circumstances which are facts, things that





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we can say in a court of law, this happened, or this didn't happen very factual. Then we have thoughts which are sentences in our brain. We have feelings which are vibrations in our body. So circumstance, thoughts, feelings. Then we have actions, which are the things you do or don't do. Maybe sometimes there are things you stop doing or start doing, or that you keep doing that create the results in your life. And then we have results, which I like to describe as the physical manifestation of the thought. It's like the thought and 3d.

Okay. So the process is we do a download. We pick a thought. And then we model it out. We increase our self awareness by doing this. And we label that a name, we call it our unintentional model. Then we see if we want to create a different result, we might create an intentional model. The purpose of using this tool is to clear our mind. Only from a clear mind, can we create a powerful future. Now, Brooke reviews the basics of the self coaching model on The Life Coach School Podcast, episode 26. For the purposes of our episode today, I'm going to review the model in the context of an example with a wife and a husband in a situation that I think is super relatable and you can really understand it.

Now, I really believe that understanding how to use and apply the self coaching model and really learning how to coach yourself through any experience is a game changer. The models is really simple, but there is nuance to it that is really important. It helps us reduce the emotional pain that we feel in our lives. But I also want to mention today really is an overview situation. It's kind of like when you're learning to cook a new recipe or something like that, it might take a few times before you get the exact recipe down exactly the way you want it. So today's kind of just like an introduction. So here's an example of what's possible when you use the model. I had a coaching client where the wife who was my client, but was really disrespected by her husband. They disagreed about many things, especially in how they parented their kids and how





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to handle situations with their kids all the time.

So she came to a coaching session and she said he doesn't respect me. So we ran a model on that thought. And I'm going to paraphrase here because it was a while back. So let's say the circumstance was, her husband said some words, right? He said a sentence or two. And it sounded to her like he didn't respect her. So the circumstance would be her husband spoke. And then her thought was, he doesn't respect me. The feeling she had was anger. And it was a very intense feeling that day. And then the action that she took was to argue and disagree with what he was saying. And the result was really total disconnection in their daily life, right? The physical manifestation of a lack of respect is, you know, we don't get along, right. We're definitely not passionately connected. So we ran that mile together.

We got curious and we looked for a thought that could bring her some relief that could help her look at the situation and perhaps have more compassion or see things from a different angle. If you remember episode one of this podcast, The Marriage Life Coach Podcast, I talk about perspective as being one of the absolute pillars to have a thriving relationship and our ability to adjust our perspective is so important.

So we were looking at kind of recalibrating her perspective to see if there was anything else to see in that situation. And as we did that, she realized that her husband was actually scared about what might happen to the kids in one of these situations. And so her thought went from, he doesn't respect me to, he is scared.

Then feeling she had instead of anger became compassion. And the action, now we were kind of doing it after, it happened, but had she had the opportunity to go back and do that





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over again, instead of arguing with him, she would've listened to him and listened to what his concern was, why he was approaching it this way, what his thoughts were. So the action became listening instead of arguing. And then the result highly scientifically, very sophisticated result was being able to have a conversation without freaking out, right?

I like to keep it real here. So I really invite you to notice how powerful that was and that moment for my client to be able to access compassion when all she had been feeling on a regular basis was anger. And I really want you to see how powerful it can be for you too. Now that we have reviewed acceptance, boundaries, remember shoes we need both of them. And the self coaching model, now we can talk about manuals. And I used to work in HR. I used to write manuals. I love manuals. Manuals are absolutely awesome, except when they're not.

So here's the deal. If we want to know how to onboard a new employee, that is a great use of a manual. A step by step guide on what to do and how to do it. Super clear so everyone's on the same page. Awesome. In episode 11 of The Life Coach School Podcast, Brooke defines the manual as an instruction book, we have written for somebody else. This works for the receptionist in the office, just fine with your wife or your husband, not so fine. So the big problem is that we write the manual in our minds. Then we constantly revise it, add to it, change it. We never share it with our partner. And then we tie our happiness while being a full emotional life to whether or not they follow it.

Now, I'm going to give you a super personal example for this one, because even life coaches have manuals. And I definitely had a big one. When I first got married, I used to spend every Thanksgiving with my best friend and her family, and she loves to listen to the podcast. So shout out, um, her name is Mary. My hubby, of course, spent the holiday with his family. And I





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just assumed, the manual maker that I am, that we would do whatever I wanted to do. I mean, obviously that's a good idea.

However, my fabulous, delightful, wonderful husband-to-be had other ideas. And he was most definitely not following the manual of this situation. And this happened before I was a coach, and I honestly wish I knew about manuals back then, but I didn't. So we did the best because we could with what we had, and we had a very nice little passionate disagreement. We went to our corners, we decided we loved each other more than we loved fighting. And he spoke and I listened. I spoke, he listened. And at the end we invented a new holiday to deal with the situation.

Well, not exactly. But first we threw away our metaphorical manuals about how things should be. Then we looked at the core of what we really wanted, the essence of what we wanted, which was to spend time with the people that we love. So we went to his cousins for Thanksgiving, which by the way, was awesome. And then we took New Year's Day, a holiday that no one had a claim on. And we basically invented a whole new tradition.

And for over 13 years now, we get together on New Year's Day with my best friend and her parents and my godchildren. And we exchange gifts and we have a great time and we all really love getting together on New Year's Day. And I'm sharing the story because I want you to see what is possible when instead of trying to get someone to follow your manual, you just throw it away and you open up space for love and creativity and getting your needs met in a whole new and different way that you may have not considered before.

If you are struggling with your expectations around how someone you love should be, definitely





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listen to episode 11, where it goes in depth on how to understand what manuals are and how to get rid of them. And by the way, acceptance and boundaries and the self coaching model are really great tools to have in hand, when you open up a manual that you're going to want to get rid of. So these things, they go in order, you go in this order for a reason, okay. Before we wrap up, I want to share a new resource that I just created for you. If you have watched or listened to The Better Marriage Masterclass, you know, that includes my Five Shifts to Help You Transform Your Relationship, and I wanted to help make that even easier. So I took the questions that I ask at the end of every section of the class, and they added some questions, really simple ones to help you dive just a little bit deeper.

And I put them in a very plain ugly Google doc, but my team took my Google doc and made it an electronic Cinderella. I made a beautiful workbook for you to use. So it's both practical and beautiful at the same time. And we will include the link to that resource in the show notes as well. If you've watched the master class already, you could just use the workbook like a guided journal. If you haven't, we'll include a link to the podcast edition of the masterclass, so you can listen and then use the workbook to go even deeper into your own relationship and really start moving it forward.

Now, today is a very big day for show notes. I feel like there's going to be an after party on the show notes page. So definitely [MaggieReyes.com](https://maggiereyes.com) is where you can find all the show notes that I mentioned for today's episode. And I love to hang out at The Better Marriage Club on Facebook. So if you have questions about anything I shared here today, come on over to The Better Marriage Club. It is like my electronic family room. I look forward to seeing you there.

