



EPISODE 27: RELATIONSHIP MASTERY PART 2

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Hey everyone. Welcome. I am writing up my show notes on a Sunday. The hubby had some work to wrap up too and we just watched our first episode of Mr. And Mrs. Murder, it was so much fun. It's an Australian show where husband and wife team run a cleaning company together and they clean up crime scenes and they solve the murders for the crime scenes they clean up.

They have all this witty banter on the show. And while we were watching my hubby turns to me and says they are us. If we were Australian and ran a cleaning company and solved murders. We both had the best laugh with that. So I had to share that with you all. It's on Amazon Prime in the United States and a big shout out to my listeners in Australia. Hey Australia. It is so fun to know we have listeners all over the world.

So thank you for being here and check out Mr. And Mrs. Murder, if you'd like that kind of show. Okay. Today, I am delighted to share Part Two of The Nine Principles of Relationship Mastery from Brooke Castillo and The Life Coach School. If you have not listened to part one yet, definitely check that out. If this is your very first episode of The Marriage Life Coach Podcast, welcome.

I'm so happy you're here. There's so much goodness for you to listen to. Okay. So The Life Coach School is where I trained as a coach back in 2011, 2012 is when I graduated, and I wanted to do a series of episodes where share my favorite teachings from my most important mentors. And of course this had to be the first one. And I'm so excited to share all of this with you today. So let's dive right in cause I have a lot today. We're going to be robust.

You're going to leave this episode for sure, with something that will help your marriage be better and stronger and really feel like a loving place to be. I know this for sure. So just to recap, these





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are principles that I think are really essential to achieve relationship mastery.

I'm going to tell you a bit about why I love each one and how I think it's useful, how I apply it with my clients and we'll link to The Life Coach School Podcast, episodes that I mention in the show notes. So if there's a concept that sings to you or what are the principles that you just really deeply resonate and you want to go even deeper, I will help you do that.

Definitely, today is a day to listen to the episode and then check out the show notes after. Okay. Principle number five is called creating passion. In Episode 113 of The Life Coach School Podcast, Brooke talks about creating passion in depth and she talks about it in the context of your purpose and also in the context of really being able to create any emotion we are craving for ourselves without waiting for anyone else to give it to us.

I see this all the time in my marriage coaching work, and I really used to see it in HR too. And it's this idea that my job will make me happy or my husband or my partner will make me happy. And that idea can be so, so poisonous. And so disempowering because if we're waiting for something outside of us to make us happy. And that thing outside of us has a cloudy day wakes up on the wrong side of the bed.

You know, something happens then our power to really enjoy our life and take positive action in our own behalf is useless if it relies, right on this external force in order for us to be happy. We're going to talk about this in depth, in different prices today's episode so just stay with me if you're thinking about how to apply that. So as I was saying, like when we look for external forces to help us create passion, one thing is to help.





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The other thing is to depend on, right? It robs us of our own inner power, but it also put so much pressure on the job or the partner that it can really doom relationships because whenever we're having a bad day, it must be their fault. Right? So I definitely want to agree with Brooke because first of all, that is typically a good idea.

And I want to agree with her that we can approach creating passion by really looking at the thoughts that are inspiring, our emotions or feelings and using the self coaching tools to turn that around. And I also want to add that in the context of longterm relationships, either something like a marriage or maybe a job you might have for 10 years or 20 years, something like that.

One of the things that we forget is that doing new things releases dopamine in our body, which is the feel good chemical. We think we have fallen out of love, or we are stuck in a rut in our job. When in reality, what we need to do is find how we can make it fresh by doing something new, something that adds novelty. So dopamine is released in our body whenever we experience novelty, newness. So newness does not mean complicated-ness, okay.

It's probably not a word, I'm using it anyway. So newness does not mean complicatedness. New simply means trying a new restaurant together, anything that is outside of your normal routine. When you do this, the chemicals that your body produces are an experience that feels a lot like passion. Now, as I'm recording this in July of 2020, there are many parts of the world on lockdown because of coronavirus.

And we're all in sort of various stages of not really being able to engage with the world as we did before the virus. And I just really want to emphasize that even on lockdown, you can try new





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things together, even if it's something as simple as taking a morning off and watching a movie, instead of doing chores, like if that's your routine is to do the chores first, mix it up and do them later. Even if you do your daily check ins at night, plan a lunch together instead, or have coffee or tea together, instead main idea is simply something new.

So anything outside of your usual routine will help with this. That's a very simple thing you can do right now, whether it's at work or at home, wherever you want and feel more passion, explore what is something new that you could do and then see what happens. Okay.

Now there's some excellent research quoted in Psychology Today, which is a website here in the U.S., I'll link to it in the show notes, that says that the top three factors in feeling romantic love, no matter how long you've been together are these three things that I'm about to share. So I thought this was so useful to remember. One is thinking positively about one's partner. Notice how I talk about perspective really over and over again in different ways on almost every episode of the podcast, because thinking positively about your partner requires you to have a deep understanding of how to create perspective.

It's like if you're a photographer and you need to understand how lighting works to take great pictures, to have a truly great marriage, you need to understand how your opinions are formed, how, how you form them and really know that just because you think something, doesn't always make it true. And the ability to question that and then shift your focus and shift your perspective. Is so key.

So the more you practice different ways of thinking positively about your partner, the better. Now the next one from Psychology Today, and again, I'll link to the article in the show notes, is





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thinking about your partner, even when you're not with that person. So when you think about your partner, when they're not with you and those thoughts that are positive and loving, you are exponentially more likely to have a better relationship. Now that you know, that all you have to do is practice that, which I love, it's like something so simple.

And the third indicator they found in the research that strengthens romantic love, no matter how long you've been together is physical affection, which includes hugging, kissing, holding hands, all that fun stuff. So side note, I love giving things like kissing for homework. You can absolutely go home tonight, kiss your honey and tell them your life coach said, kissing is fundamental. We need to do more of it, right? So you can see that there are very, very simple things we can do where passion becomes something that we can engineer we can generate and cultivate it. We do not need to wait for passion to happen. We can make passion happen right now.

It's so important. Now that brings us to principle number six, in what I'm calling your Relationship Mastery Plan, which is generosity. Now it might feel odd to include generosity on a show about relationship mastery, but here's the deal. At some point, there will be no logical reason. You will have practiced acceptance to the best of your ability. You will have set your boundaries and looked at your thoughts and created your passion. All of the things we're talking about today, and you will find yourself at some point at a loss as to what to do in some delicate and difficult situation that you have no plan for whatsoever.

When that day comes. Remember this moment and remember that you can just invoke the generosity protocol. I love naming things. So that's what we're calling it today, the generosity protocol. And in episode 115 of The Life Coach School Podcast, Brooke explains that generosity is when you give more than is expected or necessary and you give more than is expected with no





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expectation of anything in return, you just give it.

And she gives some great examples in that episode. So I definitely encourage you to listen to that from my side. But I want you to know is that generosity is one of the highest forms of love. That's how I like to think about generosity. If you ask me what is generosity, that's how I will answer. It's one of the highest forms of love. When I see marriages where the partners are full of resentment and anger, I very, very often see a total absence of generosity. Generosity is what is missing. Now people will say, but Maggie, I have given so much, why do I have to give them more? Right. And my answer, is always this. First, I like to be a little fun and always say, you get to do you boo. Okay. But let me tell you, if all that giving was with an expectation of return.

Think about that. Tell me this, was all that giving with the expectation of return, because if it was, that was not love. That was a transaction. That was a business deal. We often come to our relationships from such a place of scarcity. We think there is not enough love or not enough sex or not enough understanding or not enough listening. What if we put aside for a moment, whatever that is, that feels like there's not enough of and just invoke the generosity protocol and just started giving with no expectation of return.

Just because giving feels good. Now I can hear some of you right now saying, but giving doesn't feel good anymore. This person hurt me. This person doesn't deserve it. And the thing I really want you to understand is first of all, we did a whole segment in the last episode on acceptance and boundaries and boundaries are really important.

So this is not about letting anyone walk over you. I want to be super clear about that, but what I really want you to understand is when you are being generous, you are not being generous





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for that person. Okay? You're being generous to that person for yourself. Okay? I'm going to repeat that. You're being generous to that person for yourself. Generosity is a gift that you are giving yourself to step out of scarcity and stop looking to everyone else to fulfill those needs and cravings and just be generous because it feels abundant and delicious and powerful. Now, for some of you that may feel like a big leap. And I totally get that.

Okay. This is why I put these principles in this order because you really want to be practicing all the other principles first. Generosity is like Ninja level relationship mastery. I don't even know if that's the right term, but it's like a very high level of relationship mastery.

It's the reason I didn't cover forgiveness as its own separate topic on the podcast. Today it is one of the principles. Although Brooke does have a great podcast on forgiveness that I do recommend, and it's 144 and I will absolutely link to that in the show notes, you can check that out if you want. But here's the thing, generosity makes forgiveness a moot point.

You no longer need to be in the energy of forgiving and letting go because you are in the energy of giving, regardless of whether the person deserves it or not. And as I said before, this does not mean you don't have boundaries or standards or limits. You can totally have all of those things and to be generous at the same time. Okay, I know for some of you, I just blew your mind with generosity so, oh, just take a deep breath.

As we move on to the next principle, which is called how to be a good mate and that's episode 165 of The Life Coach School Podcast. And here's what I want you to know about any longterm relationship. As you know, I am a total nerd over the research that they do the Gottman Institute as well. And I've been trained in their system, which I love. And the research says the number





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one indicator of a couple, that thrives is the quality of their friendship. Now, think about that for a minute. Do you know how to be a friend? A real friend, a good friend? Then you know how to stay married, if that is what you want. Whenever you are in doubt, you can check in with yourself and ask, would I do to my best friend, what I'm about to do to my partner right now.

It's so simple, so deep, sometimes so hard, right? Simple does not mean easy. Just means simple. Now maybe you've never had a good loyal, real friend and you need some examples. You need to concrete to-do list. If you need that concrete to-do this, definitely listen to How To Be A Good Mate, I will link to that in the show notes, and you'll be all set. Now, accept, have boundaries, clear your mind, be generous, create your passion. If you do the things that we've been talking about it these last two episodes, and really all the episodes of this podcast. If you do these things regularly, it would be almost impossible not to have a great relationship. One of my favorite lines from that How To Be A Good Mate episode, is number 11 on Brooke's list of how to do it.

And here's why she says, she says, make her own happiness and meet your own needs. Hello, adulthood, your happiness is your responsibility. Please do not try and delegate it to your mate, meet your own needs. I love that so much. We already talked about this in the context of creating passion, how waiting for your partner to meet your needs is really a useless way to spend your time. And I feel so strongly about this. He or she does not complete you.

You complete you, right? Not only are the Hollywood movies wrong, even though I have to say, I've never met a rom-com I didn't like, I still watch those and I enjoy them and all their wrongness. I believe there's a whole section of psychology that we, as a society did need to rethink around feeling validated by someone's reaction to something. The expectation that





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someone else gives us validation and that we therefore can not have it unless someone else gives it to us, trips up so many relationships.

And here's how I like to think about it. I complete me and I validate me and I love me cause I'm delightful, right? You complete, you, you validate you and you love you because you're delightful. Now I appreciate it when I can share something with you and we can have this experience of life together, but I'm not going to wait for you to decide whether or not my feelings are valid or worthwhile.

I am going to decide that for myself. Now I know a lot of therapists into this podcast. I love psychology and therapy and coaching. And I know there are other schools of thought that think differently than the way we're trained at the life coach school and the way that I naturally think, which is why I love my training even more. I just think it's so important for us to question things.

And we should question the way external validation is approached in a lot of psychological settings. I also go into depth in Rethinking The Five Love Languages episode about this, I'll link to them in the show notes as well. Here's what I want you to know. I could be wrong. I am totally open to being wrong about anything all the time ever. In this particular case, I just want someone to really prove it to me in a way that makes sense and that heals relationships.

In the meantime, I will take my wrongness and keep validating myself and being happy and not waiting for anyone else to do that for me in the meantime. Okay? Now that we have that all clear, let's talk about difficult conversations. There is no way that you will practice all these principles and not encounter a difficult conversation on your way to your most maximum self-expression in truth, and in love.





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We need to be able to have difficult conversations, they are so important. And that doesn't mean that they're easy. So Brooke's episode 166 teaches in depth, how to approach difficult conversations. And she says, most of us have no idea how to communicate without blame, frustration, defensiveness, or justification. And I really think she is so right about that. And she breaks it step by step down on the podcast. And I'm just going to read you my favorite favorite part.

I just think it's so clear and so useful. So here's what Brooke says, "The best way to find peace in relationships is to give up right and wrong. No one has to be right and no one has to be wrong. No one wins in a difficult conversation. The first thing you have to agree on is that you don't need to be right about anything. This immediately removes the need for defense, without defense. There's no need for offense. And the war is over."

Think about this. You guys, if you give up the need to be right about something, you remove the need for defense and without defense, there's no need for an offense, and the war is over. Now, do you see why you want to practice acceptance and generosity first? If you do those two things, it becomes so much easier to give up the need to be right, because you're being generous instead.

Really notice that all of these principles build on each other. All of them go together. In my time as a coach, one thing I have learned a lot about is how stress cycles work in the body. And it's so important to understand how they might be affecting you during a difficult conversation. First, you can minimize how difficult the conversation feels by practicing generosity and giving up the need to be right that will already be helping you.





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Then you can set yourself up even further for success by deciding ahead of time to notice the lens through which you are listening. Imagine you had sunglasses for your ears, okay? And you could put emotions into those sunglasses for your ears, your ear glasses. Are you listening from curiosity to get to know this person's point of view? Are you listening from anger or frustration?

If you can set an intention for curiosity, you put your curiosity, ear glasses on. Then you are in the 1% of relationship masters in the whole wide world just with that. Then if on top of that, you understand that either you or the other person might be in the middle of a stress cycle while you're talking, that's a whole other level. So let's say you are having a difficult conversation. In fact, think about the last difficult conversation you had with someone.

Notice if these things happened or any of these. In a stress cycle, you have fight, flight, freeze, and appease. Notice if either of you wanted to scale it up and really argue about it, that's fine. Notice if you wanted to drop everything and pretend it wasn't necessary to figure this out that's flight, or your partner in that conversation had flight. Notice, if one of you withdrew almost to the point of not being able to have the conversation, that's freeze.

Notice if you wanted to agree and move on, or the other person was agreeing to move on. Even if, either you didn't actually agree your heart of hearts, you didn't truly agree, right. Or they didn't truly agree and you could tell that's a appease. Let me tell you right now, you cannot problem solve in the middle of a stress cycle. You just can't. We all try and we fail. Then we think we don't know how to communicate.

I hear that. I hear that and I see that all the time. So what do we do instead? We practice all the principles that came before so we can create a sense of emotional safety with the other person.





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We look for opportunities to create safety for ourselves and help them in the process if we can. And they are in charge of their own emotional safety, for sure, but we can support and cultivate an atmosphere where safety is more likely to occur.

So sometimes you just need to ask yourself, what would I need in order to feel more safe right now? And it's as simple as that. And you just see where that leads you. And that me too, the last principle of relationship mastery, which is being coached. Brooke talked about this in depth in episode 178 of The Life Coach School Podcast, and here's what she says, "Of all the things you can do in your life of all the things you can invest your money into doing. I think mental health has to be at the top of that list."

Yeah. I agree with you, Brooke. Brooke explains how she coaches herself all the time. And here's what she says about that. Sometimes it takes someone outside of your brain to help you see things that you cannot see from within your brain. I love that so much. We don't see your own blind spots. None of us do, even if we're brilliant with somebody else's situation, we could be in a similar situation and not see the simplest solution just because we can't see our own blind spots. Now think about all the things that we talked about in the last episode, in this episode about relationship mastery. I bet there are some things that I shared that you never quite looked at that way before.

And I bet that you're walking away with a lot of ideas about how you can really be a master at relationships. And those were ideas you would not have had without listening to a coach teaching you about this topic. My coaching philosophy is that the most important work happens outside of a session. So I really loved it when Brooke said this, I'm going to quote her again. "I want to make sure that when you're being coached or when you're being taught that you





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separate the following: there's learning and listening, then there's applying. There's getting help being coached, and then there's doing your homework and coaching yourself." I love that so much. And I really love that all of us Life Coach School Coaches, no matter what our specialty is, we teach our clients to coach themselves.

We get to the root cause of what is happening and we operate at such a high level as coaches because we deal with causes and not symptoms. And when you give yourself the gift of being coached, what you do is shorten the time it takes to get to mastery, because we know the routes and we can show you the way. Then it's like a new chapter of your life starts because suddenly you're on another level, and then your goal is can even change. They can get bigger, they can get bolder because what you know is possible for you changes. And it's so beautiful to be a part of that for us on the coaching side, to see our clients thrive and grow and do amazing things. It's such a deep honor, and it's such a sacred blessing. I love that. Now, before we wrap up today, I want to add a bonus principle, so to speak.

I had already selected these nine and I had written up my notes, and then episode 236 on compound interest came to mind and I had just listened to Simon Sinek give a talk on almost the same topic. And I was like, the universe is speaking to me. And when the universe speaks to me, I listen and then I share that with you. So here's what Simon Sinek said. He was asking an interviewer, I think someone he was talking to, do you love your wife? And the host said, yes. And Simon said, prove it.

And he went on to explain that we express love in moments over time. And those moments add up, but you don't have one big moment of love. You have many small moments. It's the same with how we treat employees. It's not about one big bonus. It's about how we feel at work





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every day and what we do at work every day. Every single principle we talked about today is absolutely subject to the compound interest rule, which is you don't get any kind of result that matters from doing it once.

You get results that matter from doing them in small ways every day. Having a generous moment, practicing saying, 'this person is who he is and that's okay'. Identifying one thought and then another, and gradually changing the way you think about things. None of that happens in a day. It happens step by step. You may feel like a master already, or you may have just started working with these concepts recently. It doesn't matter. Every day it's the small choices we make over and over again that have the biggest impact.

I mentioned the Gottman Institute earlier and they're another huge influence in my work. And they literally named their podcast, Small Things Often. That is how important small choices over time are. So when you think about compound interest, think about the compound interest you create when you are loving and generous just a little bit every day.

It has been such a joy to review and share these principles and these podcast episodes with you. Thank you for taking a stand for your life and for your marriage by listening today. Remember this, listening to this podcast is always a good idea, but putting these principles into practice is the most important thing. So go back, download the episodes I mentioned, listen to them, take notes, pick something to implement, rinse and repeat.

And if you'll do this, no matter how imperfectly, you will absolutely transform the way you experience your relationships every day. Okay. Before we wrap up, I want to share a new resource that I just created for you. If you have watched or listen to The Better Marriage





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Masterclass, you know that that includes My Five Shifts To Help You Transform Your Relationship. And I wanted to help make that even easier.

I took the questions I ask at the end of every section of the masterclass, and I added some journaling questions to help you dive deeper. And of course I put them in a plain ugly Google doc, but my team made my Google doc and electronic Cinderella, which is now a beautiful workbook for you to use. And we will include the link to that resource in the show notes as well. If you've watched the masterclass already, you can just use the workbook like a guided journal. And 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 deeper into your own relationship and start moving forward now.

So definitely come on over to the podcast after party on the show notes, there's going to be a lot of resources on the show notes. You can find those at [MaggieReyes.com](https://maggiereyes.com). And if you want to chat about any of the concepts that I share on any of my podcast episodes, come on over to The Better Marriage Club on Facebook. I would love to see you there.

