



EPISODE 29: RELEASING THE NEED TO BE RIGHT – WITH DR. MELISSA PARSONS

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/29](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/29)

Maggie:

Hello, everyone. I am so delighted to introduce you to my client, Dr. Melissa Parsons today. She hired me for individual marriage life coaching because she loves her husband so deeply and was arguing a little bit more than she would have liked and not enjoying her marriage as much as she knew was possible. So she worked with me one on one, and she has generously agreed to come on the show today and share her experiences. And one of my favorite things that Melissa says is that something does not have to be broken to improve it beyond measure. I absolutely love that.

Maggie:

Melissa is a pediatrician in Columbus, Ohio. She has been for the past 20 years, a very successful practice. And most recently, Melissa has decided to become a coach herself and her specialty is helping her clients silence their inner mean girl. So we'll talk a little bit about that too. And I just want all of you to know, just because you coach doesn't mean you become a coach. Just so you know that you can still have great success in all your careers. But we're definitely going to talk a little bit about that with Melissa. And we don't usually swear on this show, but we might today. So I want to give you a heads up if you're listening to this and you're not on headphones or something like that, just be aware it could happen. Welcome Dr. Parsons.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Hello, miss Maggie. Thank you for having me. I'm so excited.

Maggie:

So everyone, I want you to know that I asked Melissa to go through her notes. She's a very copious note taker and journaled very much during our time together. And I asked her to just





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look at her notes and see what stood out for her. So I literally have no idea what she's about to share right now. So when you looked back at your notes and you looked at what was most powerful for you in our coaching time together, tell me what did you find what you want to share today?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Well, first of all, I started looking back and you had challenged me to journal every day and I love a challenge. And so I did do that and I started looking back and I was like, if I start writing down everything that was meaningful to me during this six months together, I'm going to end up just rewriting the whole dang journal. So, you know, I think that one of the biggest things that we talked about a bunch is, you know, having that five-star marriage and how John and I were at the Hilton, we were in a city that we wanted to be in. We had a view, but that it was possible that we could take it up to the next level. And you know, I've always wanted to go to the Saint Regis Bora Bora, and stay in one of those over-water huts. And I will one day go, that was kind of one of the overarching themes.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Like, would this happen at the Saint Regis Bora Bora, if this happened there, what would they do? How would they fix it? You know, would they let it fester and become a bigger problem or would they nip it in the bud right away? So, I think that was one of the biggest things that, you know, you don't have to be staying in the Motel 6 to, you know, hire a coach and work on your thoughts around your marriage. So, and then I think another one of the huge things that you taught me, and I know this to be true, is that your thoughts about your marriage are your actual marriage, because your relationships really only exist in your brain. And so if you're, you know, if I'm constantly thinking John is a slob or he's so needy or, he always has to be right.





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

And that type of thing, you know, those types of things are the things that, you know, you think over and over and over again, and then that doesn't lead you to any good feelings. And then I get to act out like a brat and then we just have this terrible result over and over and over again. So I think just intentionally thinking, loving thoughts on a daily basis, even when it was hard, and I wasn't feeling loving, like, what is the one thing I could pick out that I want to think over and over and over again, you know, to make it so that my thoughts weren't negative a lot of the time.

Maggie:

I love that. And there's two things that popped out at me when you said that. One is intentionally loving thoughts, even when you don't feel like having them like taking, making the effort. Right. Aren't our marriage is worth that effort. And sometimes we don't even know we have that choice. And so what all these podcast episodes that I do are about is to tell people, you have that choice. You can actually choose that. I want you to know that choice is available to you. Right? And then sometimes those thoughts are not even true. Right? You can think them, that doesn't make them true. Right. And I love that one of the thoughts that you mentioned, just sort of off the top of your head, just as an example is like him needing to be right. Because one of the things we worked on a lot was you needing to be right.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Touche Maggie Reyes, Touche.

Maggie:

Now heads up to our listeners. I did tell Melissa the things that I looked up from our time together. So she is aware, like, I didn't just like surprise her just now. And here's one of the things





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we talked about quite a bit. And I'd love to hear your thoughts on this, which actually, before I forget at the beginning, Melissa mentioned that she journaled a lot of our time together. She journaled pretty much every day. Journaling is part of what we do, but it isn't absolutely required for what we do. Because I know some of our listeners are going to be like, that'll never happen. I will never do that, what planet do you women live on? What's going on? Right.

Maggie:

And I just want to make it clear that one of the things I do as a coach is I lean into your strengths. So if you would tell me, you love journaling I'm to say, great, do more of that. If you tell me you love going on, walks with your dog and thinking about your life, I'm going to say, great. Let's do more of that. So it's not a cookie cutter, I mean, that's why it's individual coaching, right? It's not a cookie cutter thing. It's really, we lean into what you love the most. Some of my clients journal a lot and some of my clients just come to their coaching calls and we coach, and then they go out into the world and do the things.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Right. Yeah. Awesome.

Maggie:

The purpose of the journaling is to go out in the world and do the things. And I think that that's just an important thing to remember. So I wanted to mention that before I forget. So, always needing to be right. Tell me what you think about this. This was my hypothesis that we kind of worked through together. And now, as I keep coaching more and more professional women in positions where being right is really important. Right?





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Maggie:

So Melissa is a doctor and she has to be right about dosages or procedures or things that she does where you know, people's lives are in her care. Right. And I also coach like engineers and people that it's like, if the measurements are wrong, the bridge will fall. It's very important to be right in that context. And then you go home and it's like, am I right about the cumin or the salt or the whatever little thing it is. It's like, it's not as essential, no bridge is gonna fall.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:
Right. Right. Right.

Maggie:

When you're in a profession where being right is really important and you do that nine hours a day, 10 hours a day, 15, 20 years, and you feel challenged, doing that at home. I just want to normalize that it could feel challenging. And that nothing's wrong. Right. Like tell me your thoughts.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

So yeah. I mean, I think that was one of the things that we really worked through. You know, John and I both have jobs where it's essential that we're right. Obviously we're not going to be right a hundred percent of the time, but we want to be right, certainly way more than we're wrong. And we also have jobs where we are in charge when we're at work and people are doing what we ask them to do without much questioning. And they trust us to, you know, have the right answers and that type of thing. And then to have us both come home from doing that all day. And for me, especially having to relinquish the ability to be right or to have the last word or to get that little final dig in. I would say that if you had told John and me at the beginning of this, that that





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would not be an issue in our marriage anymore. We both would have thought that we were all high on something.

Maggie:

And why is that? And how is it now? Is it less of an issue now?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah, I would say we have a saying at our house that you helped us with, which is stay in your lane, like you're in my lane. And when we coaching together, you were like, you're not only in his lane, you are reaching through the window and holding onto his steering wheel and trying to drive his car for him. And I was like, I think this may have been one of the times that I called you a bad name because it was so like, oh my gosh, this woman, how does she know me so well?

Maggie:

Let's pause there for a second because I think having a coach is amazing ever since I got into coaching, I've always had a coach of some kind. And it's like, you have someone in your corner, you have someone to help you. It's really empowering. And it's fun to have a coach, but it's also confronting. And one of the reasons I wanted to have you on and have people listen to, what is it like, what is it actually like? Right. And there were moments, when Melissa was not delighted with that example of her being in a lane, driving her car, reaching across the other lane, putting her hand through the window and trying to steer his car. It was not her favorite analogy. However, it was highly effective.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yes. So now John just does the beep warning, like the cars that have the lane warnings, he's like,





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beep beep beep, I'm like, oh shit, I'm in his lane.

Maggie:

And now you can laugh about it, right?.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Oh, absolutely. Yeah. As before we would be so offended and, you know, make it mean that, you know, we should have never gotten married. I mean, we never said that, but it was like, oh, why did I marry this person who doesn't do what I tell him to do a hundred percent of the time.

Maggie:

The scandal, how is that possible? One of the things that I do in my own relationship, is I kind of look at why do we get along so well, right. I'm constantly like, what is it about us? Then I get to dissect and then teach people. And one of the most recent things that I had this moment of lucidity about is we laugh about things that other people argue about.

Maggie:

And I've given this example on the podcast before, but it's like, I've never met a cup I didn't like. Literally at my desk right now, I'm on zoom with Melissa so I'm showing her, I have like two mugs and a cup. Right. And my husband grew up in a house with, you know, everyone was assigned one cup and that's what you used all day. Right. So, in this case, I am the annoying person in the situation. And my husband is just like, he just laughs about it. He's like, oh, my wife is home. There are cups in the sink and all is well.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:





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She's had a wonderful cup full day today.

Maggie:

So it's just like, if you can take something you're currently angry about and think about, could there be a universe where it's possible that you could laugh about it instead. Or, your husband could go, beep beep! Instead of, what are you thinking, woman! Yeah. Just consider that idea, right. Okay, tell me what else is in your notes.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

I wrote from one of our first sessions together, I can contribute to John's happiness, but I'm not responsible for it. And he can contribute to mine, but he's not responsible for it. So both of us kind of getting happy in our own lives so that we could bring that happiness and have fun together. Yeah. And then going back to the, needing to be right all the time. One of my mantras that I had to write was, I am safe and loved even when I'm wrong. That's so beautiful. Yeah. And then it is humbling to admit that I don't have all the answers and I don't have to be in control all the time. What a relief.

Maggie:

That's so deep. I had written down needing to be in control because I think they're like almost twin sisters, but they're exactly the same. Right, right, right. Yeah. And it's like, that needs to be in control. And again, when you're in a role in your professional life or, you know, with your kids or in these different situations where being in control is absolutely the right thing to do at that moment. When you're driving a car, you do want to be in control of your car. Yes. But that releasing the need to be in control of everything and everyone and everyone's reactions and how everyone's going to do all the things and all that, that can be very, very challenging if you're





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spending the rest of your life in situations where it's appropriate.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Right. Yeah. And I mean, one of the things that you said to me that I probably swore at you about too, was when you are spending all of your time, controlling everyone else, the only person who is out of control is you.

Maggie:

That does sound like something I would say.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yes, you did.

Maggie:

How did it feel to receive that in that moment? Like, I know you signed up for coaching, you wanted to go all the places to heal and to feel better and to like be an, even more loving wife and to be an even happier woman. But in that moment, what was the feeling that you had when you were like, oh.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah. I mean, I think it was kind of an aw shit, I'm the one who needs to change here. No one else needs to change in order for me to be happy. And I mean, I think that for that one, I mean, I've said it so many times since then when I'm counseling parents in the office and when I'm counseling my own clients and that type of thing. You know, that, I think that one was a really easy one for me to see pretty quickly that I needed to delete that program and, you know, come





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up with a new one, where I, you know, quote unquote, let everyone else be who they are.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Right. And I get to be who I am. And, you know, and I think one of the other things that I wrote down is the authentic me is pretty amazing. Even when I make mistakes, it's helping me to live on the edge of my comfort zone and expand my awesome life. And I would say, you know, I have so much more time now to do other things because I'm not spending all of my time up in my own brain spinning about how I'm going to control everyone else in my life that I've totally taken control of my life and started a second career. And, you know, so it really is amazing how much more time I have. And it's not even just like physical time. It's more like mental time and energy.

Maggie:

It's so fascinating. Because that's one of the byproducts that we never really realized until it happens to us because it's happened to me too. I had a very challenging relationship with someone in my family that once I have drew my boundaries around what was okay, and what was not okay in that situation, it's like all my creative juices started flowing and so many ideas, flooded in. I was like, why is that? And nothing really necessarily changed in the outer world so to speak. Right.

Maggie:

But it was just how I was thinking. Imagine if you just removed like a work weeks worth of thinking and suddenly you have all that thinking available to you and then you started having more fun. Oh yeah, for sure. Awesome, I love that. Now, one of the things that happened when we worked together was that you changed the way you were fighting. Yes. And I want to talk a little bit about that because some people think if we fight, it's a problem and I'm like, no





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Fights are normal. Fights can either bring you closer together or farther apart. We don't have to eliminate fighting forever. Right. Some people think, oh, the problem is we fight and it's like, wait, the problem is how you fight. Right. So tell us a little bit about your experience with that.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Well, I would say that my husband is so amazing that when I signed on to coach with you, you know, you and I talked about how he didn't have to be involved in this really at all. And it could just be me doing all the work. But luckily for me, he loves me and our relationship enough that he wanted to be part of the change too. So you had us read some books. The first one that we read together was *Making Marriage Simple*. And I think that that really provided a lot of insight into the other and what the other was thinking and, you know, how they might be coming at things from how they were, you know, examples of relationships that they been given when they were kids or seen on TV or whatever the case may be.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

So I think just coming at each other with more compassion instead of the need to be in control the need to be right, like trying to see it from the other's point of view. And I, a lot of times will think now, okay. In any relationship that I have, like, what is their thought model that they are dealing with right now, that's making them act the way that they are and that type of thing. So I think just kind of trying to see from another perspective, just a different lens that you always talked about, like put on a different pair of glasses and see it through a different lens. And then the other thing that I think really helped me was reading *The Four Agreements*, because it was just really even just the first agreement, be impeccable with your word.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:





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And I thought that that was like what I'm saying to other people, but no, it was actually kind of what I was saying to myself and how my negative self talk, my inner mean girl was affecting pretty much every interaction that we had. And then the other great book that you had us read was *Crucial Conversations*. And I think that that one really helped us just to, if we know that we have a big conversation, something coming up, we set time ahead of time to talk about it.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

You know, we come to it in a totally different mindset than just like an off the cuff. Like we're both exhausted. It's nine-thirty at night. We both want to go to sleep, and you know, trying to start a conversation then, or even worse, first thing in the morning, we're trying to get ready for work and that type of thing where like, there's all this other heightened stuff. And really just setting time aside to like, let's go sit out by the fire pit or let's go hang out in the, in the living room and just sit and talk and like make intentional effort to have a conversation.

Maggie:

I love that so much. And I want to mention a couple of things. So I would give Melissa homework and her husband could participate as much or as little as he wanted. So I think that that's really important. So Melissa described, like her husband was like, oh, you're reading a book, I'll read the book too, right. But it was not that I was in touch with her husband ever.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Right. No, although I wanted you to be a couple of times. Can you do the session with John, please? Haven't I changed enough?

Maggie:





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So just to be clear on that is, I always say you can share anything you want about our sessions with your partner. Some of my clients, their husband doesn't even know they're working with a coach and they just show up and do the things. And some of my clients do like take notes and give partners like a play by play of like what happened. There's no wrong way to have that experience. So I just wanted to mention that.

Maggie:

And then the books I like to have, depending on what's going on in a person's life or the chapter that we're in or whatever it is that we're talking about, I will sometimes recommend books directly related to that issue. So some of my clients, I suggest one set of books and other clients, I suggest another set of books. And I just wanted this mention that, we'll link to these three that you mentioned in the show notes for people, because they're so good. And Melissa would like to add something.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Well, you also had me read, *Come As You Are*. Oh yes. So I would say that that helped me release some control in our sexy time, time.

Maggie:

So, *Come As You Are* is a book about sort of the science of sex, like how sex actually works, but it's written in a very accessible way. The authors, Emily Nagoski. I absolutely love her. She's phenomenal. And it just helps you understand what's happening for yourself, what's happening for your partner. And so that was a book that just helped you see in a slightly different way. Does that make sense? Yes. Yeah. Yeah. That's so good.





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

And do you remember, I had to put the sign on the door for the boys.

Maggie:

You know, what, if you're willing to share that story? I think that would be a great example of like when we're coaching, things arise that we sort of troubleshoot for and it's, it doesn't look the same for every person. And so we were talking about Melissa, just being really comfortable to just relax and enjoy her husband, you know, and connect physically with him. And as we were talking about how to make that easier, right? One of the things we focus on is the easier it is and we're like, you are to do it so how do we make it easier. If you would share what your solution was? It was brilliant.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Our house is a ranch and our bedroom is not private at all. Really. It's like right off the kitchen. And so it's hard for me to just like relax and drop in and to my own body really, because I'm always worried. And we've had situations where our children have walked in on us and it's been embarrassing and I'm like, okay, I can't even relax. So I made a sign that I put on the outside of the door.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

It only had to be there for a little bit because they didn't want their friends to see it. It was a big stop sign. And it was a picture of John and me, on a weekend getaway in New York, you know, in a park or whatever. And it said something like stop before you enter, ask yourself, the following questions: are both of my parents home, is the door closed, Is the house on fire, Is anyone bleeding profusely, Do I want to see things that I may never be able to unsee?





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Maggie:

This is literally a sign on the door everyone, just imagine.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah. And I would tape it out there the first time that they both saw it. They were both like, Oh my God, you guys are so gross. And my answer to that is always like when they hear us smooching or being lovey to each other and they're like, you guys are disgusting, like stop that. And what I say to them is you are so lucky to have parents who still actually like each other and want to spend time together.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

So, and you know, I mean, I'm in a situation where I have two teenage sons and, you know, we have a very open, you know, they walk in and walk out and, you know, without much knocking and that type of thing. So I was like, just knock, pause, wait for an answer. Don't just knock and barge in. You know? So, I mean, it was kind of a joking thing, but having that out there made it so that they know now like knock, pause. And so I can kind of relax more and not have to worry that I'm going to have to explain away things.

Maggie:

Exactly. Totally. And for all of our listeners, like think about the thing that doesn't allow you to relax or the thing that would be easier if you had a protocol around it, or if you had a simple solution for it. It might not be exactly Melissa's situation, but think about something where one simple communication, maybe it's a conversation. Maybe it's not a sign, you know, maybe it's something else. But think about that thing and how you could take Melissa's sign concept and apply it to the thing that you really need to draw a boundary around or say no around, or have





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a more clear communication.

Maggie:

Like what's okay and what's not okay. If the house is on fire, it is okay to barge in. Yes, please do. Please do, encouraged, come on over. And if the house is not on fire, please do not. Please wait. Right. And this makes it so clear for everyone. And then people avoid misunderstandings and all the other things, because we have this really clear what's okay and what's not okay. Yeah. I love that example. It's so good. Okay. There was something we talked about that I named because I love naming things, no conclusions without context. Tell us about that.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

You and I would have our coaching sessions on Monday evening and I would, you know, take notes and I'd be like, I'm writing this down, Maggie, I'm writing this down. And then I would immediately want to go home and like word vomit, everything that you had told me on John. And, you know, sometimes most of the time he received it just fine. But some of the stuff you were like, wait, no, no, no, you have to like, not word vomit this on him. You need to like tell him the context and give him the lead up to it. And not just the conclusion that we came to. I can't remember the specific example.

Maggie:

So I remember it very vividly.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Good. Tell me, cause I don't remember.





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Maggie:

It was a situation with one of your sons and here's what happens. We spend a whole hour in coaching where I'm asking Melissa, what are her thoughts? How does she feel about it? What's going on? What do you want to do about it? All these things, right? What could get in the way. And so we unpack it for a whole hour and she comes to this brilliant conclusion of how she wants to handle it. And instead of, hey, here's what I've thought. Here's how I feel. Here's what's going on.

Maggie:

Here's all the different things we can do. I thought this one would be the best one. We should move to Antarctica. It's like a, where did that come from? So I have a rule now that everyone listening to the podcast now knows. So if we work together in coaching, I will remind you no conclusions without context, context matters. So if I suddenly tell you, I want to do some crazy thing I've never done before, even if it's amazing, but you have no context for it. How do you think your partner might react?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah. They're not going to feel safe.

Maggie:

Yeah. Right. The opposite of what we want. Right. Yeah. So, how is it now? Do you like pause and remember that more often? Or like how do you live in that no conclusions without context now, as you're going through a lot of, you know, growth in your own life.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:





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Yeah. I mean, I would say that, you know, I'm trying to keep him abreast of everything that's going on in my business because this is a big change for us. And he's kind of been there every step of the way so that he knows what's going on. It's not like all of a sudden and like I'm moving to Antarctica.

Maggie:

Right. It's like those Antarctica moments, we don't want to have Antarctica moments. Right, right, right, right. And the way you described it, I want to point something out because this is something that we do in coaching and a lot of variations, which is once we have a problem, we look at how to troubleshoot it and manage it and see how we're going to react to it sort of on the backend, like the problem has already happened and how do we manage it? But there are so many things that we can identify as a situation that is challenging or that we don't want to repeat over and over again. And then we also look at how do we minimize it on the front end?

Maggie:

How do we no longer experience this problem the same way we used to before? And what Melissa described is exactly that it's like, oh, now when I'm experiencing something new, I kind of walk him through and I share some of the new things I'm experiencing. So later when I come to some Antarctica moment, we've been talking about the North pole and the South pole for six months and it's not a surprise that I want to go on an ice breaker. So good. So tell me a little bit about what happened when you found out something about yourself that you weren't delighted to find out. And how did you handle that?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

I mean, I would say that I definitely reflected on it and I journaled on it a bunch until I could





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find a thought that I wanted to think about myself on purpose, that I could kind of replace the negative thought that I was having or the thing that you so lovingly pointed out that I probably needed to change if I wanted to make any major changes in my marriage. So I would say, and then one of the biggest things that, of course me wanting to be perfect and right and in control all the time, if we would have an argument or something like that. And even now, like you said to me in one of your replies, it sounds like you guys went to the park and you fell off the swing. Like it's not a big deal, like get back up and, you know, play on the other equipment. And you know, just trying to, instead of like catastrophizing, trying to learn from the mistakes.

Maggie:

That is so important. Right. We get stuck on that. I for sure have done that too, where I'm like the world, as we know, it has ended. Right. As opposed to, oh, let's go to the slide. Right. The swings, maybe not the best place to be right now, but there's 50 other things we could do with this park. Right, right, right. Yeah. I love that example.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Did I answer your question though, Maggie?

Maggie:

So what I was asking is when you found out something that you weren't delighted about, how did you handle it? And it seems like you took the time to process it, which is so important. So here's another thing I really want to share is like the purpose of coaching is not to always feel good. It's still important. Like, yes, we like feeling good, but there are times when feeling bad is the best way to feel like I want to be disappointed in myself if I'm being petty. Right. I want to have the experience of desiring to be more excellent as a human. Right. And that whole range of





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emotion that we can have. So it sounds like you would take it, sit with it, like allow yourself to feel however you were feeling and after allowing it, then you could say, okay, now what do I want to do about this next time.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Instead, yeah. What am I going to do instead.

Maggie:

Yeah. Does that feel true?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah. You described it much more eloquently than I did.

Maggie:

Thank you. Now, one of the things you mentioned when we were prepping for the show that I thought was really fascinating and I totally want to hear everything you have to say about this is that a lot of breakthroughs you had were when you kind of showed up to the session, just because we had a session scheduled, but you didn't really feel like there was anything really big or major to talk about, tell us a little bit about that.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

So, you know, in order to be the teacher's pet, I always wanted to come to the coaching sessions with the problem. And, you know, Maggie always would say, you know, you don't have to have a problem. And you know, what I, what I have learned is that, you know, you certainly don't have to have a terrible marriage to benefit from marriage coaching. And so, you know, I would sit in





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my car and, you know, wait for you to come on the zoom call and think, what the heck am I even going to say, like, everything's going pretty well right now. And I think one of the things that you taught me was awesome. Things are going well, let's figure out what we've been doing this week to make it so great. You know? So I think that that was one of my like big ahas. Like I don't have to only coach myself when things are shitty. I can coach myself when things are great and keep living into that persona.

Maggie:

Yes, learning from the successes as much as from the failures.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Right? Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

Maggie:

I love that. I love that so much. For me, it has happened as well where I'm like, Oh, I think everything is kind of okay. And then I'm like, Oh, this one little thread, this one little flutter and it opens up this whole other thing I didn't even think about just from that one little thread.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Right, right, right. And I would say the other thing that I have found is that the universe always provides for me. Like if I think I don't have a problem with something, then like the next week I'll be like, oh, okay. Yeah. I do have an issue here that I wasn't even aware of. You know? And so the universe provides, right.

Maggie:





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And again, if you want to solve something, if you want to learn to handle a situation better, somehow your life would pop up a bunch of situations that are similar. It's like, if you need to learn to set a boundary, suddenly everybody asks you for stuff all at the same time. And then you have to learn to say no, because you can't possibly say yes to all the things. What was a fun memory you have from coaching either in a session or something you did for coaching homework that just makes you smile or laugh?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Oh my gosh. The session that we did together, where I embodied wonder woman. I mean, I'm getting it framed. I'm putting it in my new office. That is this wonder woman card. So I think that was probably, I didn't know what to expect from those sessions. Yeah. And I think they were transformative.

Maggie:

So, one of the things that I do in my six month coaching program is we do three sessions that are almost like guided workshops and they're based in somatic psychology. So if you listen to the podcast for any length of time, you will know that I like continuing education. It's a thing. It's all right because I use my powers for good, but it's a thing. And so I've been doing this continuing education with the Tantric Institute For Integrated Sexuality. And one of the things about that Institute is it's very based in like listening to the wisdom of your body and listening to the messages your body wants you to hear.

Maggie:

And one of the exercises we do is connecting with what is the most empowered part of yourself, right? And for Melissa it was this vision of wonder woman. So for everyone, it's a different vision.





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It's not necessarily always the same, but that idea. And I invite you like, as you listened to this podcast, you know, even if you leave today and you think what is the most empowered version of myself, how can I embody her more? That would be a great thing for you to do. That's so good. What else is in your notes? Is there anything else that you highlighted that you want to share before we move on?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Let's see. I wrote down what would a friend do? So if John and I, I think one of the things was he was my best friend and treating him as my best friend, which he is my best friend, you know? So show patience be forgiving, greet the other with love, give second and third chances, listen and be curious, see from their point of view, celebrate the other, make plans to spend time ahead of time, lift each other up instead of putting each other down, no more rolling your eyes. And then pause before pouncing. So just taking that pause, like when he says something that quote unquote triggers me, it's like, okay, pause. Why am I triggered? It has nothing to do with him. It has everything to do with me. And then using the anger scale, which, I mean, it's just like, I don't even get upset about much of anything anymore.

Maggie:

So we have an episode now called The Anger Scale, which we'll link to in the show notes. But the way I develop these ideas is I develop the hypothesis that this is a good idea. And then I offer it to my clients as a tool to practice with and to use. And then you say, okay, did it work? And if it works, it makes it to the podcast. And I share it with everybody. It works. So tell us a little bit, just, if you were going to explain the anger scale briefly to someone, how do you use it? And then we'll link to the whole episode.





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

So I use it in all of my relationships now. And you know, obviously when you're at home, you act differently than you do at work because they're the people you have to love you no matter what and that type of thing. So in order for me to get angry at work, truly angry, it takes a lot. So I would have to like be above and nine at work for anybody to know that I was angry. Right. So it rarely if ever happens, that does not mean I don't make snarky comments at work. But at home, basically with John, I set my number at, I think a seven. I don't even remember now because I haven't had to use it.

Maggie:

Okay. So before you continue, so, the anger scale goes like this 10 is like maximum thermo nuclear situation, right. And one is all as well with the world. And you pick a number on the anger scale where it's like, if anything, that's below a seven, I'm not even going to address it. I'm just going to move on with my life. You can pick whatever number, it could be, anything below a five or six, it doesn't matter really what number you pick. And then anything that's above that number.

Maggie:

It must be addressed in some way. Like we know that we need to have a conversation or set a boundary or make a request or do something depending on what it is. Right, right. Right. But what I have found is that a lot of us and myself included, it's like, we have no calibration for how angry we should be about things. So we get equally angry about like the bread wasn't put in the right corner of the refrigerator versus like, you're late for like the family dinner we've been planning for six months and it's like equal and things are not equal, right?





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Equal blow ups. Yeah. Yeah. So I would say, just, you know, asking myself before I say anything, like, do I need to be upset about this? I don't think I do. You know? And, then, like you said, if there's something that I am upset about, I don't handle it in the moment when I'm upset, because we know that we don't process things very well. So I try and obviously I'm not perfect. And this is not to say that I never yell or get upset or anything like that, but it's happening much, fewer and further between. I mean, I can't even tell you the last time I got really upset enough to yell at home like that.

Maggie:

First of all, how amazing is that? That's so awesome. And I really want to point this out. Think about coaching like baseball, which is the only sport I understand, but insert your favorite sport here. It's players still make mistakes, miss shots, like, you know, will miss whatever it is that they're playing, but being coached makes them better at the thing they're doing. It doesn't mean they're perfect at the thing they're doing. Right. They'll win more games than lose, right. When they're being coached at a high level and then receiving the coaching and making tweaks to however they're playing their game.

Maggie:

So that's something I also want to really make an emphasis on. Cause I think in some times where people who are interested in personal as I have always been, and as you are, sometimes there's pockets of personal development that don't include nuance. And I really want this show and what I stand for it to be something that includes nuance. Like that includes, hey, you know, we're human. We will stay human. Always. We will just be better at it. What do you think?





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah. I mean, I think that that's so true because you know, there have been times early on in my coaching where I have kind of, I shouldn't still be having this problem. I've had a coach now for X amount of months or X years or whatever. But no, I think, like I said before, all the issues that we have are going to keep coming back at us until we actually finally learn the lesson and it may be that we never learned the lesson. And it's something that, you know, has to keep coming back over and over and over again. But hopefully we get a little better at it. Each time it comes up.

Maggie:

Yeah. And as it gets okay, as humans it's okay. It's expected. It's normal that we have tender spots. I have tender spots that may always be tender spots. But where before maybe we used to get mad and angry and it would take us three weeks to get over it. And it would be a whole drama and all the things. And now it's like, oh, that's a tender spot. And I got upset this afternoon and we can still connect at dinner.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Oh yeah. And I mean, that has what has taken our fights from the, you know, huge novels down to little tiny chapters instead of the big things. Cause I mean, we both do still have tender spots and we probably always will just based on, you know, being human. So, and I forgot about the tender spot thing until you just said it and it's so true. I don't think of it that way, but I know I'm like, oh, this is that. Here we are.

Maggie:

And it's okay for that to be, right? Anything else in your notes? Those were the highlights.





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Um, yeah, I think we kinda went over it. Like I said, I think I could do this for like six months.

Maggie:

We'll have Melissa back on another day. So tell us a little bit, if you're open to that, about your coaching, like it's a huge thing. You're a successful pediatrician with a great practice and your community, you know, you already were thriving at a very high level. And then decided to become a coach and just tell us about what you coach on now. Like what do you help people with?

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

So I would say the people that I work with are women who like you, pretty high achieving people who are like me, you know, who are generally pretty happy in their life, but they have a little area that they know needs work, and that they've been avoiding because they're afraid to kind of open up that pandora's ox and you know, what's going to be there. And I would say, what is there is stuff that you already know? It's not so big and scary. You don't have to be afraid to open it.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

You know, I tend to think of it more as like, what's the cost, if you never open it. Yeah, yeah. To yourself and to your life. Because for me, it started out as, you know, weight loss and not being able to figure out why I was so high achieving in every other area of my life, but I couldn't figure out how the, you know, get rid of the baby weight that I was blaming on my 13 year old,

Maggie:





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10 years later or whatever, right.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Yeah, exactly. So once I figured that out and, and really recognize that my thoughts created my feelings, I was in the end of my weight loss work, I really started delving into relationships. So I was like, well, let's work on my most important relationship. So I asked my weight loss coach for marriage coach names. And I actually just came across the emails where she had sent me your name.

Maggie:

Oh, that's amazing. So your weight loss coach is a fabulous coach named Katrina Ubell. Yeah. She does weight loss for physicians only, we will link to her site in the show notes, but only if you're a doctor. So don't come back to me and say, she can't help me because I'm not a doctor! So I told you!

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

If she can't help you, I can, I'm not limiting my practice to doctors.

Maggie:

Melissa can help. Obviously we're going to link to your site on the show notes. So I saw on your site about the inner mean girl, if, you know, as you know, it comes up in marriage coaching where we let that voice be too loud. And then she is mean to us and mean to our partner. Right. And your kids. So if you could share just one thing about the inner mean girl that you would want all of our listeners to hear today. What is one thing you'd want them to know?





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Dr. Melissa Parsons:

Just that it's okay not to be perfect. It's okay to not be in control all the time. Yeah. It's okay to be wrong and it's okay to be wrong about you too. Yeah. Like maybe you're wrong about you and you're not so bad and you're not so broken.

Maggie:

Yeah. And maybe you might be wrong about your partner when you think he doesn't love you or he's not loving you, you know, maybe he's trying the best he can. You could be wrong and why don't we find out, like, isn't it worth it to find out. Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much for being here. This is amazing.

Dr. Melissa Parsons:

I love you. Maggie Reyes. Thank you. You definitely are the person who watered and fertilized my idea of being a coach, because one of the things you said to me is you are such a powerful manifester. You could do anything that you set your mind to. So thank you so much for being my coach and for being my friend.

Maggie:

It's my pleasure. Okay. Everyone the show notes are going to be very robust this week. So definitely check them out, [MaggieReyes.com](https://maggiereyes.com) and we'll be back next week.

