



EPISODE 44: SATISFACTION VS. SURPRISE - DECIDE WHAT TO PRIORITIZE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/44](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/44)

Hey everyone, welcome to this holiday themed episode of the podcast. This is my number one gift giving hack to cultivate more peace and connection in your marriage, over the holidays. But this is really important for any situation where you're buying or expecting to receive a gift. If you have ever been disappointed by a gift you got from someone you love, or ever seen the face of disappointment when you gave someone a present, you will find this episode so, so useful. Before we dive in, I want to give you the heads up that as I'm recording this, enrollment for Marriage MBA, my marriage breakthrough program is open. And if you've been thinking about joining us, if you've been getting my emails, and it's been on your mind, we start the six month adventure on December 2, which is this Wednesday. So go to maggiereyes.com/group and click apply here when you go to that page. And you can join us on Wednesday and get started right away. And if you don't already get my emails, go to maggiereyes.com you'll see a big box that you can click on you put your email address, you'll get all the updates things they don't share, on the podcast, all kinds of fun stuff in your inbox.

Okay, now to a best gift giving hack. I know some of the ladies listen to the podcast with their hobbies. And if there was ever an episode to listen to with your hubby, it's this one. We are going to solve gift giving in your family forever. Now that is a bold promise. I know. But I really think we can you tell me at the end of the episode, you let me know what you think. Come to Instagram [@themaggiereyes](https://www.instagram.com/themaggiereyes), and tell me if this helps you solve your gift giving issues in your family forever. Okay, here's how it came about. I was speaking with a coaching client who does not love the gifts that her husband buys her. And because of that there's so much disappointment whenever gift giving time rolls around like not just the holidays, every anniversary, every birthday, every time any kind of gift happens. It's just this cascade of disappointments and have really been having her heart for a long time for many years. And I want to share with you today





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what I shared with her, which is this, you can decide if you will prioritize surprise, or satisfaction. And I'm going to repeat that because it's so important. I was talking with my husband about this episode, as I was writing up the notes for it. I'm like, I don't ever hear anyone talking about this. And I think people should know about this. So I'm going to do it again, you can decide if you will prioritize surprise, or satisfaction. Of course, we always get to choose what we prioritize in life. When it comes to giving and receiving gifts. What I see is so many people prioritizing surprise over satisfaction, and then being in this endless cycle of disappointment with the gifts that they receive.

And I want to remind you, that you can make a new decision about what you want and who you want to be and how you want to show up anytime in your relationship, including right now. There, let's be clear, getting gifts and receiving presents. And buying them for other people is the absolute definition of champagne problems. It's a very high quality problem to have. And it also doesn't mean that there aren't hurt feelings and hard moments around gift giving and gift receiving that we should put all that aside because there are bigger problems in the world, right? Yes, there are bigger problems in the world, you don't need me to tell you that we could just see that every day with our eyes open. And many of those problems are very complex, and will take sometimes years or decades to figure out. And all of us who want to be part of the solutions in the world's problems. We need to know that one of the ways that we liberate more time and space to be part of the solution, to brainstorm, to participate, to volunteer to get involved in whatever it is that matters to us. One of the ways we do that, to help solve bigger problems is by solving the smaller ones that are in front of us right now. So it's the holidays, people are talking about presidents and planning purchases and all the things right. Let's make that one thing better right now. One thing at a time. It's always the only way one thing at a time.





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Okay. So I don't know about you but I have had a holiday to where I have been disappointed by the gifts received.

Not just gifts from my most beloved person but different gifts that I received, right. And, I would like to think that I have not given gifts that have been disappointing, but I'm absolutely positively sure that I have, because we all do at some point. So I'll give you an example, we have lots of fun examples in this episode, so you can laugh with me. So one time my hubby was so excited, he bought me this bouquet of yellow flowers. And it was so sweet. And I could tell how excited and proud he was that he got me these flowers, we were celebrating something and he got them for me. And I accepted them with all the love that he gave them to me with. I really knew how much it meant to him, I could see it in his eyes. And then a few weeks later, I lovingly told him, Hey, heads up, just so you know, for the future. I don't actually like yellow flowers. I like pink flowers. I like white flowers, I like colorful mix and match flowers that are a burst of color and joy. Just for future reference. All those combinations are okay. But yellow is like my least favorite color when it comes to flowers. So you can absolutely be a gracious receiver in that moment. And also express your desires whenever you feel is the appropriate time and place. I find so much with my coaching clients and my students and with my friends and with my colleagues is we try to defer to the other person. And we think we're being kind and generous by deferring to the other person, but then we never speak our desire out loud. And then we get ourselves into positions where suddenly five years later, we keep getting yellow flowers over and over and over again. And we do not want that for you. Okay.

Now, sometimes when we do that, when we don't speak up, that is how resentment builds up. Right, we let one year pass, we let another year pass. And then we're still getting things that





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we don't like that don't mean anything to us. And this is why I decided to record this episode for all of you guys to really think about prioritizing satisfaction versus surprise or if you're going to prioritize surprise, like do it with your eyes wide open. Right. So why does that resentment happen? So here's one way to look at minimizing that resentment, which is to use a power question. So that's I think it's episode two or three of the podcast is called power questions. If you go to my website, you can see it there. And one of my favorite power questions is what am I making this mean? So we get the gift, and it's on anything, we have a remote interest in whatsoever. And most of the time we make it mean, if it's her husband, he doesn't care, he doesn't pay attention. Or if it's a she, you know, she has no idea what I like, or she doesn't care what I like, we usually make it mean something that isn't very good. And so the first thing to ask yourself, if you remember something you received that created any kind of emotion, like what I'm talking about today, is to ask yourself, what did I make that mean? And is there another meaning that could be more useful right now than the meaning I'm giving to it? And this you could use for any situation? Right? If there's something in your heart right now, that feels having your heart, what are you making it mean? Is there another meaning that can be more useful right now than the meaning that you're giving to it? That's always my first choice. For so many situations, you can always start with that that will always be useful. But if we want to nip this in the bud and be more satisfied. And we're happy with the gifts that we're receiving. That's really the focus of what I want to teach you today.

So it's really taking a moment to decide which thing you want to prioritize, and there's no wrong choice, I always just want you to see all the points where choice is being made, sort of like along the line of your life, choice here, choice here. There's another choice there. Here's another choice, right? So if you're deciding to prioritize satisfaction versus surprise, that's a choice. If you're





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deciding to prioritize surprise, then the choice you're making is to risk satisfaction. And some people love surprises and are perfectly okay with that risk. And if that works for you keep doing that. Always keep doing whatever is working. But sometimes you wait all year long for your Christmas or your birthday and anniversary, and then you get a present. And if you're like me, you think really that's what you came up with. And there's that disappointment. And that anger can become resentment. It can become something that gets in the way of really enjoying the rest of your relationship or gets in the way of enjoying the holiday, or the moment that you can have with the people that you care about. And then the present the object that you received, becomes like this awful reminder of these feelings. And have this moment, right? That feels so painful. And it does not have to be that way we can make a new choice, we can prioritize surprise, or satisfaction.

We forego satisfaction we will prioritize surprise. So what do I mean by that? If I'm prioritizing satisfaction, then maybe I give suggestions and give hints, I leave notes or we buy things together, and we just talk about them openly right? Then they have a lot of satisfaction, but I have zero surprise. And I really want you to think about this this holiday season. You can prioritize right one or the other. So I'm going to give you an example of a time when I prioritized satisfaction and what we did and how we approach it just to give you a feel. And I'm going to name drop here for a second because I have this Tiffany bracelet that is super cute. And I'm totally in love with it. I have a crush on it, like all over it. And it's made of onyx that has his little onyx beads and then has a little mini Tiffany heart charm. And onyx is this beautiful stone and has fabulous energies associated with it. And for over a year I never took off this bracelet. It was my birthday present. And I just enjoyed it so much. I just smile every time I think about it. Now how did this come to be? This came to me because I got the catalog. And it looks super cute in





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the catalog. And I told my husband, let's go to the store. Let's try it on. Let's see if this works for my birthday.

Now, what could have happened, he could have gotten a different catalog and got me something triple the price of this very simple bracelet. And then I hate it. And it's not even the price. It's just about what do we like? What do I think is cool? What goes with my style or my vibe, right? He could have gotten me something that I absolutely hated. And I would have been very surprised, right? Or I could have found something like I did that really spoke to me and spoke to my heart. And I could have said oh gosh, let's do this. So here's how we approached it, we made a whole afternoon out of it. We made a big production because it was my birthday. And we planned it out, we went to lunch, we went to the store, we laughed and we like just had so much fun. And there was a lot of satisfaction going around together trying on the bracelet. And when he was paying for it, the woman who sold it to us the jewelry attendant at Tiffany, he told her he could not be more proud to be buying me this gift because he was so excited that I was gonna wear it like right out of the store. And he was just beaming. And so I had so much fun with it, we both really lean into that fact. So he told her, that's for my wife, and he was so proud. And I got to have fun receiving the gift, right? And to look at it and smile every time I wear it and really enjoy it. Right? So how do you prioritize satisfaction versus surprise, it's totally up to you. There's no wrong answer.

And as I mentioned before, you can continue to prioritize surprise if surprise is working for you. But if you feel any resentment whatsoever, any disappointment over the gifts that you receive around this time of year or any time of year, then I really invite you to consider prioritizing satisfaction over surprise. And looking at how you can make it fun and cool to enjoy the gift





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giving process. And I want you to know that this works in reverse when you are the gift giver, you can do the same thing. So here's my example from something that I got from my husband, which was he's really not super impressed with material things. And he has all the basics in life. And once you get someone who doesn't really need anything, right, and he doesn't particularly like surprises either. It becomes an adventure to buy them presents. So last year, I went to look up something on his tablet, I was just I was watching TV once and look up something right, get a piece of information. And I noticed that his tablet was like lagging like I pressed a button. And have you ever done this, you press the button and then nothing happens. So you press it again and then press it again and nothing happens. So I was using his tablet and I thought how does he live? I don't understand what's going on. This is so slow, right? It's like slower than molasses, this cannot be. So right in that moment I knew I should get him a new tablet for Christmas. And I asked him about it because we prioritize satisfaction over surprise in my house. We just both do this we are very satisfied with doing it this way. So it's it's what we do. And I asked him I think that's what your president should be. What do you think? And it was really interesting because he kind of hesitated he said I don't know if I need a new tablet. He was really used to it going slow.

It wasn't anything out of the ordinary for him, but when they pointed out how slow it was, and that, you know, maybe we should consider it and look at it, we had a whole conversation about it. Which was also another opportunity to bond was another opportunity to connect, and to plan and to discuss and to see, you know, I want you all to see that sometimes anything out of the ordinary, out of your usual routine, is an opportunity for connection. And even this investigation for the tablet was something we both sort of got excited about and had so much fun with. So we had a whole conversation about what was the best kind, what was the most affordable





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what was the top of the line, and we did all this research. And then he became the proud owner of a new tablet. And this was kind of fun. So we ordered it. And then I told him, I don't want you to leave it in the box for a month. That just feels silly. But this is the plan. And we really did this, you guys I wrote up the notes to tell you the story, I cracked myself up all over again, just remembering I had this idea. So this is what I did. I said it, don't leave it in the box for a month, we are going to do a reenactment of the box opening when our Christmas tree is up. So Christmas morning, it's going back in the box. And we're opening it and I'm taking your picture with a huge smile on your face just for fun. That's what we did. He was so happy with it. And he still uses that same tablet now. And he uses it every day. So it's immensely useful for him. And it's something that every time he uses it, he can smile under the memory, the whimsicalness of taking it out of the box and putting it back in the box, which is the kind of stuff that we do at my house. But it just is now something that is so much fun for both of us. But again, it had a very low surprise ratio, but a very high satisfaction ratio. So he was surprised the day that I mentioned it. And it was a delightful surprise today. Lots of satisfaction, very little surprise. I really challenge you to think about this, because so many disappointments and so many fights. And so many resentments can be avoided or minimized when we notice just a small choice, a small decision that we can make, like the decision to prioritize satisfaction over surprise.

So the idea is to make a decision to prioritize differently around gift giving and receiving if that's something that comes up for you. For those of you who are listening, where everything is working in your gift giving and receiving, you keep on keeping on, okay. But that idea that you get to decide what you want to prioritize is always the first thing to talk about in so many different situations, whether it's my coaching clients, or my students in Marriage MBA, whether it's the better marriage masterclass, or the relationship table, which is Episode One of the





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podcast and how to have a better marriage. Decision is something that I talked about over and over and over again, because it just takes these small tweaks to feel exponentially better in your relationship. And decision is the mother of all the changes and all the improvements in your life and in your marriage. And it's so so, so important that we remember, we can always make any choice like even right now, right? And I really thought about this so deeply, most of the solutions to almost all of our problems can be traced back to either an unmade decision, a decision we made, but are not honoring, or a decision that isn't working for us anymore. So we made it and when we made it, it was working. And then time passed or circumstances changed, and it's not working anymore. So really being present to what decisions we're making in any situation is so important. And think about these types of decisions. Who do you want to be in this situation? What do you want to create? What kind of relationship do you want, what to prioritize, all of these things, they start with a decision. And it happens to a lot of us and it's not just in our marriages, in our careers in our lives and our hobbies. And it's this, we made a decision back in 2010. And we said, okay, this is what I'm gonna do. And then we do that, and then we never revisit the decision. We never check in and say, hey is this still a good decision? Is this still working for me? Is this still working for us? Maybe the decision worked for me for a while, right? But maybe now it's time to revisit it. So right now I'm inviting you to revisit the decision around gift giving, like what is the purpose What is your goal? What is your intention?

Why do you want to either give a gift? or Why do you want to tell someone that you love what you'd love to receive? Right? Okay, it's nice, and also to remember that as a gift giver, right just give a gift to my husband with the tablet example, that there's such an immense satisfaction to look in someone's face and see how happy and delighted they are is something that they enjoy thoroughly every day. So is there someone that I give gifts to regularly that I might want to





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check in and say what would feel amazing to receive this year? Right? Okay, now, if you decided to prioritize surprise, which you absolutely can do, then you can also relax into that decision and just choose not to worry. Just choose as your priority to it with your eyes open, make that new decision now. Right? And then choose not to worry about it. He said that is my gift giving hack to keep the peace in your marriage this holiday season. And it's to decide what you want to prioritize, surprise, your satisfaction. Play with it. Have fun with it. I really invite you to always play with the concepts I teach, what is my version of that? How would I apply it in my situation. And I shared this with my bestie Mary, who always listens to the podcast. So hi, Mary. And she shared the brilliant way she handles us in her marriage and I want to share that with you. This is like out in the field, people out in the field.

Okay, so she gives her husband three options of things she likes, she pre selects three things that she would love to receive. And then he picks one of them. So she gets to have satisfaction and an element of surprise mixed in. And I think that is so brilliant. I absolutely, absolutely love that. So here's your challenge this holiday season, decide, surprise or satisfaction. You can tweak it like my bestie did and have a little bit of both. make a conscious decision about how you want to give gifts and what you want to do about any past disappointments about gifts you have received. And then really enjoy everything you can about this holiday season. I am sending all of you so much love and if you want to give me a present since I openly share the things that are meaningful to me, you can leave a review of the podcast and iTunes I would be delighted to receive that as a present. Okay, now remember, if one person can change the world, one person can change your marriage and that person is you.

