



EPISODE 56: PERFECT WIFE SYNDROME

THE MARRIAGE LIFE COACH PODCAST | SEE SHOWNOTES AT: [MAGGIEREYES.COM/PODCAST/56](https://maggiereyes.com/podcast/56)

Hey everyone, welcome. Today's episode is going to be short and sweet because I noticed myself falling into what I'm calling perfect podcast episode syndrome. Today's perfect wife syndrome, right? But I was falling a little bit into perfect podcast episode syndrome. Like I wanted to pack all the things and teach you all the things right. And although I always really want to be committed to quality, I also want to practice letting go of over achieving and just achieving, just remove the over, okay. So we're gonna talk about overachieving, and our overachieving tendencies today and perfectionism today, but we're gonna do it briefly, we're gonna move on, we're gonna talk a little bit about what it looks like. I think we all are gonna recognize the examples together. I'm definitely with you on that. And then we're just going to talk about how do we move forward from perfect wife syndrome, or perfectionism, whatever you want to call it. Before we dive in, you know, I love to share some fun things. I'm obsessed with the new TV show, everyone must know about it. It's not even a new show. It's an old show. But I found it now. So it's new to me.

So I'm currently obsessed with the show 911. Have you seen this show? If you've seen this show, you will understand. I've never seen it before, we checked it out over the weekend, and I'm absolutely obsessed with it. The thing is, I'm a complete scaredy cat. So some of the situations that they show on the show are so intense, because they're answering these emergency calls. I literally, like put a pillow in front of my face and look away, I just can't see the things. But I don't care and love the show anyway, I think it's fascinating. I'm really, really fascinated by the variety of calls. Of course, everyone on the show needs a life coach needless to say, all of them. But I'm really fascinated by the rate of calls that they take, the random situations that they have to answer. The firefighters and EMTs they're always problem solving and being creative. And the 911 operators like wow, right?

Thank you to every emergency responder. I'm just so so so grateful. I know that the show maybe





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glamorizes a little of what it's like but it also shows the trauma and the stress and what a commitment of heart and soul it takes to be an emergency responder. So I just want to give a big shout out to emergency responders everywhere. Thank you for the work that you do. Another thing I really really love about the show is that it normalizes therapy, getting help, talking about issues that are challenging and feel difficult to manage when you're in a job where you can have things like compassion fatigue, and you can really get burnt out seeing people struggling through some of the worst moments of their lives because they're having all these different emergencies. So I think the more we talk about mental health and emotional health and normalize things like therapy and coaching and other different healing modalities that are not just for our body, but for our brain, I think it's just good for everyone. So 911, it handles emergencies to just check it if that's something you want to watch, but if it is, it's really, really good. Okay. Now, as I'm recording this, it is February of 2021. And enrollment for the marriage MBA, which is my six month marriage breakthrough program is currently open. If you have not applied yet, do it like right now we start the first week of March. Go over to maggiereyes.com/group and you will get all the details there.

Okay, let's dive in. Let's talk about perfect wife syndrome. I talk a lot about how nothing in your life needs to be perfect to be awesome. I think that is so important to just repeat incessantly we're talking about that today. I see it come up over and over again with my clients and my students. And because I love naming things, I just named him seeing perfect wife syndrome. If you have ever cleaned your house before the house cleaner came over, you have it. Let's just put that out there right now. If you have ever felt guilty or inadequate for not having a clutter free home or not cooking a whole meal from scratch, or feeling like your dress size should match your shoe size, or anything has to be spotless or otherwise perfect. You probably have some version of it too. And as I was typing up my notes for today's show, I remembered the time that my mother in law was coming over this was a few years ago, I had a mess in the living room,





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and I just threw everything into my dressing room with a strict order to my hubby to not open that door under any circumstances. Have you ever done that? Like, under no circumstances do we open that door. So just remember that, like, let's just put it all somewhere else, we're not actually cleaning it, we're just putting it somewhere else. By the way, I live in an old house with an odd shaped room. So we made that my dressing room and that's what I call it. It sounds way fancier than it actually is just a heads up, but I love it. Okay, if you're listening to this podcast, it is likely that there is some place in your life where the illusion of perfection creeps up. Something does that home, sometimes it's at work, I have certainly been that person that checked an email like three times or 34 times before I sent it out, right?

The illusion of the perfect email. It could be a messy kitchen table. For me personally, the fact that I don't really know how to cook, and I don't really have ambitions to learn. It's such a disappointment to me, right? In my perfect wife ideal scenario, I would be so delighted to learn, right? So occasionally, I remember I'm disappointed by it. Now, it's completely irrelevant to my husband, he loves cooking, he could care less, as long as I'm, you know, his dedicated sous chef and his assistant, and wear the apron that says will cook for kisses, which always makes him smile. So it's really not relevant to the overall quality of our relationship. But I had this image of perfection that I should want to do this thing. And sometimes I remember I have to remind myself, it's okay that I don't want to do this thing, right. Another way that perfect wife syndrome pops up is sometimes I would much rather cuddle and talk and watch your favorite TV show have more than one, 911 is my current obsession, and laugh together. And they'd rather do that than have like supersonic sex, right? I mean, we can all agree supersonic sex is awesome, right? But I actually have to give myself permission to say yes, it's awesome. It's delightful. But what I would really like right now is maybe just a deep conversation with a lot of hand holding, right? Or something that I've been looking forward to seeing on Netflix or something like that. So things like that, where you either have a conscious or unconscious idea of what perfection would be.





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And you have declared that whatever you're doing is the opposite, anything like that.

We can just call it perfect wife syndrome. Let's name it, we identify it. And then let's let it go. Like let's let it all go together. Right now, this episode, let's just decide we're done with it. No more. We had this thing and now we're going into remission. We're going to take some medicine, some mental medicine that will help us get there. And we're done. So here's the medicine. It's remembering that perfect is not real, that perfect is an illusion. It sounds so simple. But we keep striving for it, even though it really is an illusion. Excellence is real. Doing your best in this moment is real, like showing up as best as you can giving from your heart totally real, perfect illusion. It's this nebulous, unattainable fantasy. That is actually if we go a little bit deeper into perfectionism, we can find that it's one of the principles of what has been studied around white supremacy culture, the idea that there's one way that it's the right way that there's a perfect way and that anything else is deficient is actually a characteristic of white supremacy culture. And I am a life coach, and I'm not a sociologist or a researcher. So I will link to the show notes to a great reference document that I found on website called dismantlingracism.org on the characteristics of white supremacy culture that have been studied, identified and labeled. Because one of the things I have really learned in the past year is that we all need to know what ocean we are swimming in. We need to know the social constructs that encourage the desire for perfection, and how that creates in us never feeling good enough or perfect enough to fully enjoy what we do have or fully enjoy who we really are. So I will link to that in the show notes. But just know that some of the thoughts that you have right now today about what is right or wrong, what is good or perfect. They don't actually come from your brain. They come from bedtime stories we heard as kids songs on the radio, movies and TV shows influential figures in our lives. That told us some things were true. And then we accepted that maybe as kids or young adults and then we grow up, and we think our house needs to be cleaned before the cleaning person comes over, right.





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And it's just crazy. But it's so so true. So if we want to go into remission from perfect wife syndrome, we want to completely let it go. We need to take mental vitamins, we need to remember who we are as humans. And remember that there is no need for perfection in order to have a fabulous life or a thriving marriage. Think about for a moment how your own thoughts about what is perfect, and what isn't, can affect your relationship with your partner. I talk about husbands a lot on the show. I understand that it's a very heteronormative things to do. And I just want to say I usually work with women who are married to men. That's why I talk about men all the time. But I deeply, deeply honor all forms of loving connection. And I always want to say that to. Okay, is there a perfect way to put away dishes? Think about you and your partner? Is there a perfect way to discipline the kids? Is there a perfect way to arrange the pillows on the bed, I know some of you will go down to the match with the pillows on the bed. I understand. Think about any fight you have ever had because your partner did something differently than how you would do it. Right? Listen, I teach this for a living and even I have had that happen. So with loving compassion, we just want to see where seeking perfection or some idea, some idealized concept of perfection, in our mind, in our brain created by thoughts is keeping us from having the life we want in the marriage that we want. We just want to notice, we want to notice when we apply it to ourselves. And we want to notice when we apply it to our partners, and we want to notice when we apply it to maybe I don't have kids, but if you have kids and you have an image of what they should be doing, or they shouldn't be doing.

Right, you associate that anything other than this thing is wrong and bad. We just want to question it, right? We just want to question, am I seeking perfection or am I just seeking excellence or doing our best or something like that, right? So if we want to let go of this idea of perfect wife syndrome, what do we do instead? We have to start thinking on purpose, literally thinking new thoughts on purpose. Thoughts, like nothing in my life needs to be perfect to be





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awesome, right? Perfect is an illusion as I mentioned before. Joy, pleasure, happiness and satisfaction are only possible for me when I say goodbye to perfect and say hello to me, my messy, amazing, completely imperfect self, right? When I accept myself as I am and my husband as he is, and let go of whatever image of perfection I thought I needed in order to feel okay. That's when I can actually be okay. I can do things with heart, I can do things with love. I can love my husband as best as I can. And I can commit to that every day over and over and over again. And I can let that be enough. I can let that be okay. Right? My dining table can be messy, and I don't have to beat myself up over it. Right. That's the key, right is we seek perfectionism, then we fall short of the thing that we think is perfect. And then we engage in this behavior where we beat ourselves up and spend so much time and energy beating ourselves up. That it's like we're not contributing what we could be contributing to our relationships to the world to ourselves, because we're spending so much time battling this monster that we'll never conquer. Because doesn't exist, it's not there. It's an illusion. So one of my favorite sentences, nothing in my life needs to be perfect to be awesome.

Repeat that until you know it to be true in the cells of your body. Notice when you say it, if it feels untrue, like notice where the opposite comes up. Nothing in my life needs to be perfect to be awesome. Imagine if that was true. What would you do today? What would be on your plate, what decision might be slightly different. It's a good thing to think about. And remember that you get to decide what your life as a wife is, you get to create a marriage that works for you. And it doesn't have to make sense to anyone else. It doesn't have to look like anyone else's relationship. All it has to do is make sense for you and your partner. Nothing you own. Nothing you do or don't do, can take away from who you are inside, which is a person with a heart full of love to give. And I know you're a person full of love to give because you're listening to the marriage life coach podcast, like, obviously, you're a person who wants to put love and healing into the world just by virtue of being here. And that is what really matters, the love we put into





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the world, the time we take, to dream to create, to imagine to forgive, to create connection with the people that we love the most, not the number of dust molecules on our kitchen tables. That's not really what matters the most. It matters a little, we want some cleanliness, right, for safety purposes. But beyond safety purposes, right? It doesn't matter as much as most of us think it is.

Okay, that is perfect wife syndrome. I just want all of us to know nothing in our lives has to be perfect to be awesome. And if you know someone who's suffering from perfect wife syndrome, share this episode with them. Let's all go into remission together. And if you're loving the podcast, please take a moment to leave us a review. I would absolutely love that. That would mean so much to me. I actually read the reviews whenever I'm having a cloudy day. And you all helped me turn my light back on and keep working away to make marriages better every day. So if you're loving on the podcast, leave us a review. I'd love to see it. Okay, that's a wrap. Now here your very important instructions for today. Go do something with love imperfectly today. Okay, see you next time.

